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RAINBOW GOLD.

A NOVEL.

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BOOK II.

HOW JOB ROUND BEGAN HIS REPENTANCE.

CHAPTER I.

'GREEN fields,' said a dreamy voice—

'Green fields and falling waters, and, afar,
—Faint as that echo of his watery war
Old ocean leaves within the twisted shell—
The peaceful chiming of the convent bell.'

'Clem!' said another voice, quick and clear and eager, 'that is beautiful. It's like Keats himself. You are a poet, Clem—a real poet.'

'Ah!' said the dreamy voice, 'it would be easy to go mad with vanity and think so.'

On a blossoming bank, beside and below a Jacob's ladder, lay a man of uncommonly large proportions, smoking a pipe, and staring up at the blue of the summer sky through the tracery of a dog-rose bush and the trailing woodbine which grew above it. When he had first heard these voices he had lifted his head to listen, and had dropped back again with a recognising smile. He was a man with a huge beard of chestnut red, and a moustache to match; he had a great bony nose, big grey eyes, and shaggy red-brown eyebrows, and as he lay there he looked a tranquil defiance at the very sky above him. The dominant expression of



the man was calm defiance. He was loosely dressed in well-made tweeds of light texture but darkish colour, and the thin fabric, falling in natural folds about his limbs, showed the lines of thighs and arms which might have served a sculptor with a tolerably worthy model for a Hercules. His hands and face and neck were lean and brown, and, massive as he was, it was evident that there was scarcely an ounce of waste material about him. His white wideawake hat had fallen off, and his head lay nestled in it; one great leg was flung lazily across the other, and his whole attitude was one of peace and ease. Yet the merest look at his face sent the pleasant country lane and the idle, restful attitude clean out of mind, and left you with the sense of a masterful challenge, so unconscious of itself, and so much a part of the man's nature obviously, that it impressed profoundly, but could not irritate as any conscious defiance would have done.

A Jacob's ladder, in the Castle Barfield idiom, is any flight of steps which runs from a raised field into a lane below it. The name may be known in other districts, rural or once rural, but I have not met it elsewhere. The Jacob's ladder outside Castle Barfield was a common tryst for lovers in the summer time, and that lover would have been hard to please who would have wished a prettier trysting place. For the dog-rose bloomed there white and pink in its season, following on the white and pink of the earlier may; and the great white crowns of elder blossoms were thick in the beautiful overgrown hedges; and harebell and foxglove and fern, and all wayside plants and flowers known to the region, flourished on the banks in their own time and order, and made the lane a very garden, delicious to heart and eye. And wherever the hedges broke there were miles and miles of gently rolling dimpled hills and vales, a pastoral country rich with wheat and barley, and sweet grass for the browsing cattle, and glorious with great elms, like a park. The high-lying fields above the Jacob's ladder commanded this view unbrokenly, and the two young people whose voices had disturbed the idler were placidly aware of the lovely scene, and were both in tune with it. They were man and maid, and the maid, whenever she looked at the man, regarded him with an air of affectionate protection. He was a mere dwarf of a fellow, with a writhen and stunted figure, and she was a young Juno, with just a touch of rusticity and no more. The girl was quite a grand creature to look at, with her noble stature and heroic figure, and the man was piteous by contrast. He was young, but he was

yellow and wrinkled, and his brown eyes, which showed preternaturally large and bright, held a look of uncomplaining suffering. She was full of health and strength, and moved—conscious of the glory of the day and the solitude of the fields—with a hint of a dance in her gait, whilst her companion shuffled and crawled at her side. She was dressed in a soft white muslin with pink sprigs sprinkled all over it, and the fashion of the dress was the fashion of the year 1858.

When she had stepped over the stile and had reached the first round of the ladder, she turned and gave her companion so serviceable a helping hand that she might almost be said to have lifted him to her side.

‘Hillo there!’ said the recumbent giant, as the two came down the steps together hand in hand. The girl leaped into the lane, and, taking him by both idle hands, pulled at him laughingly until he stood up and stooped to kiss her.

‘Clem!’ she cried, ‘look at father! Did you ever know such a lazy fellow?’

The writhen dwarf was in the lane by this time, and was holding out a blanched, attenuated hand. The big man stooped and took hold of it tenderly, as if it had been a child’s.

‘Clem, old boy,’ he said, in his deep tones, ‘you’re looking unusually hearty.’

‘Oh,’ said Clem, cheerfully, ‘I’ve been pretty well for a day or two.’

‘That’s right,’ said the giant, stooping for his hat, and tossing it on his head anyhow. ‘And where are you going, you young people?’

‘We thought of going to the Strawberry Gardens,’ said the girl, ‘if Clem won’t be too tired.’

‘Tired?’ says Clem, striking a comic attitude. ‘Do these feeble folk imagine that they can walk *me* down?’

‘Come along,’ cried the big man, pulling at his red-brown beard, and laughing affectionately as he looked at the quaint little figure. ‘We can spend a pleasant hour or two there, and send for the trap to drive home in.’

The girl was on tiptoe behind him, arranging the white wide-awake, and he turned to pinch her ripe cheek. She passed her arm through his, nestling up to him a little, and the three sauntered on together along the pleasant lane. Far away, in the middle of the drowsy fields, there were pit stacks with lazy lines

of smoke sailing away from the tops of their slender cones, and in the intense quiet of the fields the fall of a distant forge-hammer sounded like the audible beating of the pulse of the summer day.

'Father,' said the girl, 'Clem has grand news to-day. The London publishers are going to publish his poems.'

'Bravo!' cried the giant in a lusty voice, stooping to pat his diminutive friend on the shoulder. 'Bravo, Clem! Go on to fame and fortune, lad.'

'Well,' said Clem, smiling, 'I'm not very certain, Job, of either of them. Even the empty praise is problematical just yet, and the solid pudding is denied me altogether. They consent to publish and to take the risk, but they pay nothing.'

'That's as much as can be expected to begin with, perhaps,' said the other. 'We'll guarantee a circulation of two, eh, Sarah? And you can do without the filthy lucre, Clem. Your bread's buttered for you beforehand, and you can cultivate literature on something more palatable than a little oatmeal.'

'Yes,' said Clem, 'I am a very close-shorn mutton, but the wind is tempered.'

They both looked at him quickly, but he answered their glances with a smile. It was so unheard-of a thing that he should complain, that his companions were startled to hear him recognise his own condition in howsoever slight a way. The little speech saddened both father and daughter for a moment; but the hunchback went his way smiling and dreaming, and it was evident that he had no sense of sorrow on his mind.

'I can't say,' broke in the big man's voice on the silence of the lane, 'that I have any great fancy for the run of modern verses; I can't understand Browning, and Tennyson is a great deal too sugary for my fancy. Scott tells a plain tale like a man; and Byron is the most enchanting grumbler in the world, and, besides that, he has fun in him. But, leaving those two, I have to get back to Milton before I find anybody I can greatly care for.'

'You're a Tory, Job,' said the hunchback, laughing.

'I'm too old a bird to learn new songs, and that's a fact,' said the big man, laughing also, 'but I'm ready to punch the head of any critic who says you're not worth three of Tennyson, and twenty-four of Browning. They're worth nothing between 'em.'

'And three times nought is nought,' said the girl, 'and twenty-four times nought is nought. What a courtier to live in a poet's palace! isn't he, Clem?'

'Oh!' said Clem, with a comic upward look, 'he means well.'

They all three laughed together in a way which indicated a common understanding and affection.

'And how are the folks at the farm, Clem?' asked the giant, idly, like a man who expects a comfortable answer.

'All well,' Clem answered. 'There's a curious fellow there just now—a sailor—an odd animal to have about a farmyard certainly, but he seems to understand his work. He's a proficient liar, and full of yarns about himself and his adventures. He knows, for one thing, to within a hundred miles or so, the whereabouts of a great buried treasure. He rejoices in the transparent alias of Tom Bowling, and declares that he was christened by that name, and that the song was written about his father, which were christened Tom, or leastways Thomas, afore him, so he avers, and "his 'art were kind and sawft: faithful below, he did his duty, and now he's gone alawft." He treats the ballad as a documentary evidence of the importance of the family, and argues that his father must have been an exceptional man to inspire the poet.'

'A nice man, evidently,' said the other, carelessly. 'Where does he come from?'

'I don't know,' said Clem, with half a laugh. 'My father had a written character with him, and Mr. Bowling is very handy. He says it is a popular error that his father died on shipboard. It seems that he gained so much in prize-money that he was able to retire, and to devote himself to agricultural pursuits in his old age, so that Thomas the younger was about a farm until he was twenty years of age, when, being smitten by the unattainable charms of a slap-up young lady, which was the daughter of a magistrate, he ran away to sea and entered on a roving life. He declares that he never stays in one place more than six months, and he tells us he is seeking the one man in England who has a clue to the buried treasure, half of which legally belongs to Mr. Bowling.'

'A queer dog,' said the giant, lightly, 'and, as you say, a proficient liar, evidently. I must get a look at him.'

'I can promise that you will find him entertaining,' said Clem.

As they talked the girl looked from one to the other, turning at the sound of each voice, and when her father met her glance he smiled.

'What are you looking so very, very resolute about, you droll old dear?' she asked.

'Was I looking so very, very resolute?' said he, with a humorous elevation of the thick red-brown eyebrows. 'Perhaps I was resolving not to be entertained by Mr. Bowling.'

'But you *were* looking resolute,' cried the girl, 'and you smiled at me as much as to say, "I could walk through a stone wall if I wanted to."'

'Was that what I looked like?' said her father, comically. 'What a desperate old buccaneer I am, to be sure!'

'But it's true, Clem, isn't it? Isn't it true sometimes, Clem? Doesn't father look sometimes as if he would walk quietly up to an express railway engine, with his mind made up that he could go clean through it?'

'You really do look a little like that at times, Job,' said Clem, looking seriously up at his big companion.

'Desperate?' asked Job, pulling calmly at his pipe.

'No,' said Clem, 'not desperate, but wilful.'

'I was always wilful,' said Job. 'I came of a wilful stock, and I have one wilful descendant.' His daughter pinched his ear at this, and once more they all three laughed together, in a way which indicated a common understanding and affection. 'Well, here we are; and hey for cream and strawberries!' He pushed open a green-painted latticed gate, and the three entered on a wide gravelled pathway lined on either side by a close-cropped privet hedge. This pathway led to a well-kept bowling-green, with a bordering of flower-beds, and behind the flower-beds, and approached by trimly kept gravel paths edged with box, were summer-houses of green lattice-work, overgrown by ivy and Virginia creeper.

Quite an amazing young buck, with a stand-up collar, and a tall hat very much on one side, came forth from an ivy-clad house to welcome them.

'Pleased to see you, Mr. Round,' said this young man, bowing as if his spring had been touched, and still vibrating a little on his toes when the bow was over. 'Pleased to see you also, Mr. Bache. And Miss Round is always welcome wheresoever she goes.'

'Let us have some strawberries, Aaron,' said the giant, stooping to enter one of the arbours, and holding back a leafy branch so that his daughter and her companion might follow. Clem entered, but the girl was shaking hands with the young man in the stand-

up collar and the tall hat. Her father, stooping to look through the doorway, saw that her eyes were bent on the turf of the bowling-green, and that her cheek was flushed a little. He dropped the branch and sat down in a corner of the arbour, with one foot on the seat. 'You've been down here pretty often this season,' he said, in a casual tone, 'haven't you, Clem?' Clem nodded. 'You and Sarah, I mean,' said the other, with what looked like a stifled yawn.

Clem nodded again, and Job Round looked at his daughter through the leaf-latticed doorway. His grey eyes were half-closed, and his countenance was untroubled, and when his glance strayed to the young man in the high collar it underwent no change. A minute or two later, when the young man bustled into the arbour with a tray of strawberries and cream and powdered white sugar, he met that tranquil glance of half-sleepy observation, and was not in the least disturbed by it.

'I didn't like to keep you waiting, Mr. Round,' said the young man, 'and so you see I serve you with my own hands.'

'Don't brag about it,' said Mr. Round, sardonically. 'I have allowed men to wait on me with whom you wouldn't associate.'

His daughter read the tone rather than the words, and looked at him with a glance of deprecation, but the young man, who read neither words nor tone, laughed and ducked in answer as if he had received a compliment, and served out plates and spoons with businesslike dexterity. This done, he lingered as if in expectation of a request to remain, but Clem was a thousand miles away from him in fancy, the girl was too shy to ask him, and nothing was farther from Job's intention.

'Clem, lad,' said Job, with truly masculine wisdom, 'that young Whittaker gets into my throat and sticks there, like a fish-bone. I think, of all the despicable young men I know, that he is king and captain.'

'I don't think so,' said the girl, flushing and flashing. 'I think him very agreeable and very manly.'

'Pa, pa, pa, pa!' said her father. 'What does a girl know about young men?'

Now, perhaps a girl knows as much about young men as a young man knows about girls, and perhaps neither of them is very learned concerning the other. Job Round was known in Castle Barfield as a great traveller, and a great traveller was supposed, in those parts, to be a man who had learned the world

in more senses than one; but no man can find time to study everything, and Job had never devoted even a fraction of his spare hours to the study of feminine human nature.

'What's the matter with the lad, Job?' said Clem, lifting his mild brown eyes in some astonishment.

'Matter with him?' returned Job. 'What isn't the matter with him? I can't conceive of any rightly constituted mind harbouring anything but contempt for him.'

When a father thinks that a young man holds his daughter's hand a thought too long, or fancies that his daughter lowers her eyes at the young man's presence, and when he has strong reasons for thinking poorly of the young man, what ought he to do? This is a problem which has puzzled many fathers, and comparatively few amongst them have found a solution altogether comforting. Job had not a shadow of a doubt. He was a man who scorned to puzzle himself about anything. There was but one way in the world for him, and that was his own.

Sarah cared less for strawberries and cream that afternoon than a healthy girl was likely to care after a leisurely four-mile walk on a summer day. The young man in the tall collar made an attempt to approach her, and Job, with great brusquerie of manner, shouted for him to draw near, and paid him as if he had been a waiter. Mr. Whittaker longed to be insolent—for he saw now how the land lay—but it was not easy for a young man of his calibre to be insolent with Job Round, and of the two inward prompters—the fiery and the mild—he preferred to follow the more prudent.

Job tucked his daughter under his arm, and marched her from the gardens with no abatement of his outward tranquillity. Clem followed with a confused sense of discomfort, but with no understanding of the situation. The girl, with an indignant and yet tender swelling at the heart, thought Mr. Whittaker an amiable, manly, and ill-used personage, and was disposed, in a general way, to be rebellious against the paternal authority and judgment.

On the way back the talk was all disjointed, and the idyllic sentiment of the early afternoon had vanished, as such delicate and pleasant things have a knack of vanishing. The poet parted from his companions at the corner of the lane which led to his father's farm, and went home alone, with a sense of lonely sadness for which his bodily fatigue was partly answerable.

'I am going to tea at Grandfather Armstrong's,' said the girl,

when she and her father came in sight of Castle Barfield High Street.

‘Very well, my dear,’ said Job, placidly. ‘Shall I call for you in the dusk?’

‘If you like, dear,’ returned his daughter, melting a little. Surely no daughter ever had a better father.

‘Very well, then, sweetheart,’ said Job. ‘I’ll be there at nine o’clock.’

With this understanding they went their several ways. Job’s figure would have been noticeable elsewhere, but the Castle Barfield folk were used to him, and were, moreover, the sort of people who find anything wonderful and strange for half an hour, and straightway cease to wonder. He had found for the parish a bit of romance once upon a time, but that was long ago, almost time out of mind to modern fancies. People uninterestedly remembered that his father had turned him away from home because he had wanted to marry old Armstrong’s daughter. In four years’ time he had come back again and had married old Armstrong’s daughter against old Armstrong’s will, and had made a runaway match of it. Then he had once more returned, and had built unto himself a house, and had dwelt therein, and had never done a hand’s turn at work, being described as a gentleman in the list of voters for the county, and having made in some far-away place, known vaguely as foreign parts, enough money to live on comfortably. Sometimes he talked of Buenos Ayres and Asuncion, Chili and Valparaiso, and once or twice he had spoken of a brief sojourn in the Balkan Peninsula, but these were names, and nothing more, to Castle Barfield. His four years’ absence was a mystery; the origin of his fortune was a mystery; he was a bit of a mystery himself; but the people were used to him, and had long ago ceased to puzzle their heads about him. He had been a good husband whilst his wife lived, and now he was a good father. His wife had a noble monument of white marble, which must have cost a pretty handful of money, and he had never been a day in debt to any man.

He walked tranquilly along the familiar street, and, reaching his own wicket-gate, pushed it open and entered the garden. In the porch of the cottage was a lounging chair, and he dropped into this with an air of idleness at perfect leisure, and filled and smoked his pipe, caressing his beard the while. When he had finished the pipe, he knocked out the dead ashes by tapping it

upon his heel, and filled and lit it anew. His face was a study for its impassivity, until, with the last whiff of the second pipe, he rose to his feet and smiled.

‘So honest Tom Bowling has turned up again, has he?’ he said to himself, with an enjoying chuckle. ‘And he’s vapouring about his buried treasure still! I wonder if he’d give tongue quite as noisily if he guessed that I was near enough to hear him. On second thoughts, I don’t wonder. I know he wouldn’t.’

CHAPTER II.

THE Ring of Bells (by Abednego Parker, licensed to sell tea, coffee, snuff, and tobacco, and to brew ale, beer, and cider to be drunk on the premises) was once on a time the very heart and centre of Castle Barfield. It faced the parish pound, and the parish stocks mouldered and rusted harmlessly before its very door. The parish beadle lived hard by, and would drop in of an evening for a social glass—a genial man who could unbend in spite of his red-plush waistcoat. Next door but one to the beadle’s residence was the parish church, a grey old barn of a place, with a squab Norman tower and a roof of red tiles and green houseleek. A score of families (generation after generation the same names followed one another) slept in the green graveyard, and the sheep cropped the grass above them, and bleated a requiem scarcely more sleepy than their lives had been.

The parish pound stood at the junction of two roads, and the Ring of Bells, being just behind it, commanded three outlooks: that to the front embracing the stocks, the pound itself, and the parish church; that to the right the park of the local nobleman; and that to the left a long stretch of rolling pastoral country with a town in the peaceful distance. On summer evenings the frequenters of the house sat on benches out of doors until it began to grow dark, and there were sometimes two or three sitting on the disused and battered old stocks, each with his pipe in his mouth and his delft mug in his hand. A ‘Well I niver! Beest thee i’ the stocks again?’ was a jest which rarely failed to raise its laugh when any new comer chose to offer it, though the joke was cracked—to use the average gently—a hundred times a year.

The big square tiles, locally called ‘quarries,’ with which the parlour was floored, were as red as ripe cherries with constant

scrubbing, and a pink prodigal kept sky-blue pigs in a picture above the mantel-shelf. In the sanded kitchen a generous fire burned in all weathers, and on winter nights the glazed red calico curtains gave such a promise of warmth within as few wayfarers with the price of a pint about them had the heart to fight against. But it was summer weather, and perhaps the generous fire within had something to do with the general preference for open air.

The Ring of Bells was only the rallying-place of a village now, for Castle Barfield had grown clean away from it. Fifty years earlier, the heath on which the town came afterwards to be built was broken only by the great coaching road between Liverpool and London, and the oldsters still spoke of 'takin' a walk down to the Yeth,' when they wished to indicate a visit to the town.

Job Round and his daughter had passed the house on their way homeward, and then only a solitary carter had stood, mug in hand, at the door, whilst his horse meditated above the trough with the water dripping diamonds from his muzzle. Two or three hours later the customary guests were in their customary places. A mile away, the loungers at any house of entertainment of the rank of the Ring of Bells would have been clothed in prodigiously heavy flannels and brimless, basin-shaped caps. Here everybody was in corduroys, as to the lower man, and the elders wore small-clothes with ribbed stockings of grey worsted. Smock-frocks were the rule, and the men in small clothes wore also, for the most part, rusty silk hats with flaccid brims. Castle Barfield was Black Country, but the Ring of Bells, though only a mile away, was rural, and its frequenters were all agricultural. It might happen—it did happen pretty often—that the men of the heavy flannels were at work in the grimy, upsunned depths of the earth, hundreds of feet below the very field where the men of the smock-frocks were at work on the golden, sunlit surface.

The beadle and a small tradesman had one bench to themselves, and were the aristocrats of the assembly. The rest, with one exception, were yokels fresh from the hayfield. The exception was fresh from the hayfield too, but it was a little surprising to find him attired like the rest, and to hear him talking their talk of crops and weather and the weight of hay to the acre. One of his companions, attired in the uniform of a guardsman, would have looked no more like a man in masquerade than he did in his smock-frock and battered billycock. He was burnt to a coffee-brown by foreign suns; his billycock hat was set at the back of

his head in rollicking nautical style; he wore a thin ring of gold wire in each ear; his wrists and the backs of his hands were dark blue with tattoo marks; and his beard and moustache helped out the surprising contrast his whole appearance presented to that of the men about him. His characteristic expression was one of cheerful impudence and daredevilry; but a great scar, beginning at the roots of the hair on the right-hand side of the forehead, narrowly missing the eye, traversing the bridge of the nose, and losing itself in the moustache above the left-hand corner of the mouth, had given him a singularly sinister and dangerous look. When he walked he had a nautical roll, distinct from the clod-hopping gait, and a man with half an eye could have sworn to him for a sailor.

'Your name, I am given to understand,' said the beadle, 'is Bowlin'?'

'Right you are, shipmet,' returned the man with the scar. 'So chrissened in the port o' Plymouth in the year eighteen hunderd.'

'Which meks you fifty-eight this present 'ear?' said the beadle.

'Right you are again, shipmet.'

'You'm a talkin',' said the tradesman, who was old and shrivelled, and had a piping voice, 'to the biddle of this parish. I've allays heerd as the biddle of a parish was a mon to be civil spoke to.'

'Right *you* are, gran'ther,' said Mr. Bowling. 'But I've seen the biddle of a parish br'iled before to-day, in savage parts, and shall again, maybe. Wherefore let every man treat his neighbour friendly and respectful, but expect no further.'

'Well,' said the parish official, who was a degenerate fellow for a beadle, and had no care to stickle for his dignity, 'if you *have* sin a biddle toasted, that's so much the wuss for him, but no partie'lar charge o' mine. I was goin' to say as the talk here is as you've sin a goodish piece o' foreign parts.'

'Bless your heart,' returned Mr. Bowling, 'there's no parts foreign to me, "from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand." Only there ain't any coral strands about the Indies, nayther East *nor* West, but what's that matter?'

'When you sayin' as theer's no parts foreign to you,' pursued the beadle, 'you meanin' as you've sin 'em all?'

'All!' said Mr. Bowling.

'Well then, if a mon can mek so bode, how comes it as you've picked up milkin' and mowin' and ploughin'? Reapin' I can't yet undertek to spake on, seein' as harvest time eat gone o'er we heads yet.'

'I picked 'em up,' returned the traveller, 'ah! and more to the back of 'em, afore I ever see blue water. As the song says, "I was brought up for to reap and to mow, and to plough and to sow, and to be a farmer's baw-aw-oy, and to be a farmer's boy."'

He chanted the last line and its refrain in a growling bass, and took a swaggering pull at his mug.

'Ah!' said the beadle, thoughtfully, 'bred up to it, was you? You've sin a many strange sights, doubtless?'

'I've seen pretty well whatever there is to see,' replied Mr. Bowling. 'I've been everywhere.'

'It's a honest byword,' said the shrivelled old tradesman, with a laugh, 'as a rollin' stone gethers no moss.'

'Maybe, gran'ther,' said Mr. Bowling, with a nod at the old satirist, 'I've gathered more moss in my time than you'd think for. What d'ye say to fifty thousand pound in gold, eh? I had a fair half o' that once—a fair half! See that finger? Theer's no nail on it. Why? Why ain't there a nail on it? The others has all got nails. Why ain't there one there on that finger? I'll tell you. There was fifty thousand pound afore me, and a fair half of it mine, mind you, and I was that greedy to run my hands in it, and to get into it up to my elbers, like as if 'twas water, I tore that nail off, and it never growed again.' He looked about him with an air of challenge. The men in the smock-frocks stared stupidly at him or at one another; the beadle seemed less amazed than might have been expected of him; and the ancient tradesman's gapped gums were bared with a derisive laugh. 'Ah!' said Mr. Bowling, 'you think as I'm a liar, don't you?'

'That's the truest word as you've spoke yit, young mon,' said the ancient tradesman.

'Well,' said Mr. Bowling, unabashed, 'it bespeaks your ignorance properly. You haven't been nowhere, and you haven't seen nothin', nor done nothin' except grow mouldy, like a piece of cheese in a mouse-trap, and it comes natural to a man like you to think as anything surprisin' is a lie. If I was as ignorant as you are, I should think it was a lie myself.'

'How come *you*,' inquired the beadle, 'wi' sich a sum o' money?'

'Ah!' returned Mr. Bowling, 'that's tellings,—ain't it? It was come by honest, that sum o' money was, and half of it was mine—fair and square mine, it was.'

'Well,' said the beadle, 'with a sum o' money like that you'd be welly as rich as my lord here.' He nodded his head backwards in the direction of the park. 'How come you to drap it, having once puek it up?'

'Do you see this?' asked Mr. Bowling in answer, drawing a finger along the scar which disfigured his face. 'I come by that a-defendin' of my property, and *I* was left for dead, *I* was. One of these days I may alight upon the man that done that.' He nodded darkly, and, having drained his mug, arose, shook himself, filled and lit his pipe with great deliberation, and, receiving no reply to his last speech, rolled off with his smock-frock gathered in a great bunch at his waist.

'Nias an' Sapyra,' said the ancient tradesman to the beadle, 'mought ha' picked up summat if they'd lived i' these daysen i' Castle Barfield.'

'Well, Reuben,' said the beadle, pulling at his churchwarden in a contemplative way, 'I baint agooin' to deny as theer is some finished deceivers i' Castle Barfield. But I'm of a mind to think as theer's a word o' truth i' that mon's statement.'

'John,' said the old man, 'I thought thee hadst more gumption.'

'Didst tek note o' the finger-nail, gaffer?' asked the beadle. 'What'd bring a thing like that in a mon's yed? Who'd ha' thought o' that if he hadn't been through wi' it?'

'In the grainin' of a door,' replied the ancient, 'theer's a variety o' coats o' paint required, an' theer's marking wi' various-sized combs, and all the touches wi' the rag an' the finger. A mon o' discernation, John, teks note o' them things. If, as a wood-grainer, I design for to desave my feller men, I must look at what'd come in in natur', and set forth my works accordin'. I speakin' i' parables to put forrad my meanin', just as a mon shades his eyesen from the too-much light to see the better for it.'

'The words o' the wise an' their dark sayin's,' said the beadle, 'is a text as I've heerd handled afore to-day; an' a sage mon may talk i' that way for the better settin' forth what he manes. But as to the likeliness betwixt that finger-nail and the grainin' of a

door, theer's this to be considered. How 'ud you set about t' imitate a wood as you'd niver sin? Tell me that, now, Reuben.'

'Theer's a deal i' what you sayin',' the old man allowed after many deliberate puffs at his pipe. 'An'—come to think on it—it *is* a oddish soort o' thing for a mon to light upon in a mere lyin' speckilation. It certainly stands to the likelihood o' natur', as a mon 'ud want to wash his hands in that much golden money if he belonged to it, and had it all there anunst him bodily, an' it stands to the likelihood o' natur' as the gold 'ud lie close an' heavy.'

'Right, Reuben,' said the beadle. 'An', again, it eat the sort o' thing as a mon 'ud think on till he abode awhile to turn it over. An' if a reflectful mon like thee can on'y begin to see it, when he's turned it o'er after hearin' on it, what 'ud bring a chump-headed chap like that t' invent it?'

'Theer's rayson in what thee sayst, ode lad,' replied the ancient; 'theer's rayson in it.'

'He's been about a bit, that chap has,' the beadle began again, after an interval of sipping and smoking. 'Them gypsy fellers as is campin' at the foot o' the Beacon come down to Farmer Bache's place (to see what they could lay their pickers an' stealers on, I mek no doubt), an', as I am given t' understand, this Bowling held speech wi' 'em, i' their own lingo.'

'Ah!' said the elder, 'I heerd tell so. The tongue is Spanish, wheer the black Spanish breed o' fowls is brought from. The Duke fowt theer, a many 'ears ago, agen Bonyparty. But theer's moor nor one i' this parish as can talk to them chaps. Theer's Sojer Wilkins for one, and theer's 'Zekiel Round's son Job for another. But as for 'Zekiel's lad, he's a don at foreign tongues, an' he can talk to the glass-blowers as if he'd been brought up among 'em.'

'They'm mostly Frenchmen, I believe?' said the beadle.

'Mostly,' replied the ancient, 'but theer's Germanys among 'em, an' they've all got different lingos. I'm give to believe as the Germanys talks as different from the Frenchmen as the Frenchmen do from we. I needn't tell thee, Jack,—as goest to church o' business every Sunday, whether thee lik'st or not—as that's a outcome o' the Tower o' Babel. Theer's a tale about that as I misdoubt to be a fable, but it's said as one lad was i' the belief as he was talkin' Hebrew theer, but he was chatterin' i' one o' the new tongues as was gi'en 'em for their punishment, an' the

master-builder waxed that wroth at him he lent him a clout across the mazzard with a trowelful o' mortar, an' while he was splutterin' to free his tongue he invented the Welch.'

The town in the peaceful distance lay drowned in an amber haze, and now and then in the towering elms which shadowed the Ring of Bells a rook cawed sleepily. When the voices of the speakers paused any faint and far-off sound became clear, and the clamping of a woman's pattens two hundred yards away was quite noisy. The church tower was eighty yards away, but the loungers heard the grumble and mumble of the works of the old clock as it prepared to strike, and listened for the sounding of the hour. It came mellow and slow, and the tone of the last stroke lingered on the breathless air.

'Nine o'clock,' said the beadle. 'Time we was a thinkin' about bed, Reuben.'

'Yes,' said Reuben, 'it's all i' the day's work. Good night, lads. Hello, John! Who's that a-comin' round by the church? My ode eyesen bain't as good as they used to be.'

'It's young Whittaker, from the Strawberry Gardens,' returned the beadle. 'He's dressed too,' he added after a pause, during which the figure drew nearer—'dressed up to the knocker. Good night, Mr. Whittaker. How's things at home?'

'Ah, Jakes,' said Mr. Whittaker, 'how de do? There's a very decent glass of beer to be had at the Ring o' Bells, I fancy, isn't there? I'll try one. It's thirstyish weather.'

The landlord had come out to hear the clock strike, and now stood in the doorway with his hands underneath his white apron.

'Will you step in, sir?' said the landlord.

'No, no,' cried Mr. Whittaker, looking about him with a condescending air, 'I'll take it in good company.'

The landlord brought out a jug and a glass, and the young man stood there jauntily to take them from him.

'It's likely weather for the hay harvest, Mr. Whittaker,' said the landlord.

'Yes,' said the young man, sipping at his beer. 'I met a dangerous-looking sort of customer at the top of Dead Man's Lane—a grizzled fellow with a great cut across his face. Is he known about here? Who is he?'

'He's a sträanger, Mr. Whittaker,' said the elderly Reuben. 'He gives it forth as he's a ode sailor, but it appears as he was brought up to the farmin', an' Farmer Bache has gi'en him

empl'ymment. He's been a tellin' we——' And the old man began to tell Mr. Bowling's story.

'You're not green enough to believe that,' said Mr. Whittaker, at the close of the narrative. 'Is he, Jakes? I didn't half like the fellow's looks, I can tell you, when I met him in that lonely place between Jacob's ladder and the top of the lane.'

'He's a civil-spoke feller enough,' said Reuben, 'an' I think theer's no harm in him, though he may be a bit of a bragger in his daily walk and conversation. I should main well like to get him along wi' somebody as could mek him prewve his words—like Mr. Round, for instance. He's one o' the few i' this parish as foreign parts is known to, though maybe it's so long since he was theer as he's forgot 'em.'

Mr. Whittaker said good night and went his way towards the town, thinking no further of ancient Reuben's tale. The night was cool and balmy after the heat of the day, and the young man strode along briskly, indulging in his own fancies. He was not a very fanciful person by nature, but therè is a condition which has been known to most of us as affording the rarest of stimulants to the imagination, and Mr. Whittaker, according to his lights and his nature, was experiencing the result of that condition. As water is tinted by the soil it flows through, and as the nature of the soil may make it turbid or leave it limpid, may receive it clear and send it on foul, or receive it foul and purify it, so is the stream of every human passion enfouled or filtered by the heart it flows through. It is probable enough that most of the real passions were dirty to begin with, but civilisation has filtered a good many into purity, and religion has made some poisonous waters wholesome. Yet, if you turn back any one of these purified streams into its unclean old channel (a thing which nature and circumstance contrive to do every day of the week and every hour of the day), you can have as vile a flow as the arboreal ape was content to drink at. Perhaps the gentleman who defined gratitude, for instance, as a lively sense of favours to come, did little more than turn that purest stream into its first channel, and see what a sewer he makes it. There are hearts which taint that very water of life which we call love, until only the heart's owner and his like can bear to look at it.

According to his lights, and after the pattern of his nature, Mr. Aaron Whittaker was in love, and as in the pairing season, under the influence of the tender passion, a brighter iris changes

on the burnished dove, so the young man's outward adornments began to shine more gloriously than they were wont. The county tradesman who tailored him had sleepless nights over the thought of young Mr. Whittaker's coats and trousers, and the young man so tyrannised over and imprisoned his corns that they martyred him in their retaliation. So early as 1858 it began to be permitted to young gentlemen to wear moustaches, and Mr. Whittaker availed himself of the recent relaxation in the rules of fashion. He was tall and erect, and had a sort of dashing manner, an elastic swagger, which was not at all disliked by the young women of Castle Barfield and its neighbourhood.

Everybody knows how curiously physical characteristics crop out in a family after lying in abeyance for many generations, and it is likely that if the complete spiritual analysis of a family were as commonly to be met with as a family portrait gallery, everybody would discern the same fact in its relation to morals. Now, given a marriage which took place, let us say, a hundred and fifty years ago, by which a woman of rare moral quality, and descended from people like herself, was united to a specious scoundrel who descended from unprincipled people. Facial quality and moral quality do not travel together, and a grandson's grandson will crop up with the face of the saintly forgotten grandmother's grandmother and the soul of her scamp of a husband.

Aaron was a handsome lad, and if he had not been so fully aware of the fact would have been pleasanter to look at than he was. Some one of his ancestors had bequeathed him a good big head, and some other of his forbears had left him a rather tawdry lining for it. His eyes were eloquent of good qualities, which in themselves he not merely did not own, but for the most part despised. An ugly spirit, moving within a beautiful frame, will take a whole lifetime to carve his tenement to his own likeness, and unless he work by special means—as by a peevish temper, which, perhaps, is the quickest tool of all—he has scarcely made a mark at five-and-twenty. Give him another quarter of a century, and see how the crafty fiend has chiselled the corners of the mouth and pinched the eyes, or how the filthy fiend has thickened the lips and nose! Be shy in professing to read the faces of young men, lest you read grandmamma whilst grandpapa looks out through those innocent eyes, or the rake's transmitted features lead you to mistrust that fine old gentleman, his father, here once more present in the spirit before you.

The young fellow went on with his swaggering, elastic step until he reached Job Round's cottage gate, and there he paused. The grass grew thick beneath the hedge for a hundred yards or so on either side the gate, and Aaron had chosen grass in preference to gravel as being less likely to prate of his whereabouts to Job Round's ears, but he found the cottage in darkness, and stood at the gate awhile in indecision. Sarah sometimes walked out alone of an evening, and by pure accident encountered Mr. Whittaker. She never made an appointment with him, and was always prodigiously surprised to meet him. Mr. Whittaker had always had a sort of undefined objection to the thought of an encounter with Miss Round's father, and after that afternoon's experience he felt no easier in his mind. It was evident that the father did not like him, but then the daughter did, and it was the daughter and not the father whom he wanted to marry. It was a matter of notoriety in Castle Barfield that whatever Miss Round wanted her father gave her, and though Job himself was one of the most intractable of men, the girl could wind him round her little finger. To avoid Job, to keep in the girl's good books, and to leave her to influence her father, was obviously Aaron's only policy. He had the wit to guess that she would be no worse disposed to him because of her father's discourteous treatment of him that afternoon, and, even if she were, there was a double reason why he should see her.

He prowled about the cottage for a quarter of an hour or so, in the hope of detecting some sign of life in it, and at length, giving up all hope for the time, he set out for the Barfield Arms. He was the only son of his widowed mother, and having a pretty fair command of money, it was a habit of his, when he visited the town, to take a bed at the hotel and to breakfast there. When he swaggered into the bar his face fell a little, for there stood Job Round, and he had a shrewd fear that Job would suspect the purpose which had brought him to Barfield. But there were half-a-dozen people to shake hands with him, and by the time that friendly ceremony was over he had recovered his self-possession.

'I heard a droll story to-night, Mrs. Warton,' said he, addressing the landlady. 'There's a little bit of a romance going on down our way, it seems.'

In places like Castle Barfield, where there is never much news stirring, a story like that of Mr. Bowling was likely to pass from lip to lip with some rapidity, and Aaron told it with considerable

spirit and humour. Job Round, with his back against the door-post and his massive arms folded across his chest, seemed scarcely to listen, until the young man felt emboldened to bring his name into his speech.

'He's a bragging sort of a fellow,' said Aaron, 'and as full of lies as an egg's full of meat. It'd be a treat if some gentleman who's really been in foreign parts, and can talk the foreign tongues, 'd meet him and take him down a peg or two. But I don't know that there's anybody in Castle Barfield who could do as much, unless it's Mr. Round.'

'Have you seen the fellow?' said Job.

'Oh yes, sir,' replied Aaron, with great suavity. 'He's a biggish chap with a very dark skin, and a mark across his face which looks as if it must have gone pretty near to finishing his lies when he got it.'

'Strange things happen in wild lands, Mr. Whittaker,' said Job, smiling, 'and the man may tell the truth, after all.'

'Oh! He may, no doubt,' cries Aaron, anxious to propitiate, and delighted to find the big man in so pleasant a mood. 'If you'd like to have a talk with him—it might be interesting to you, Mr. Round—I'd undertake to get him down to the Ring o' Bells, any evening. I don't know him, but that sort of man 'll go anywhere for a skinful of drink.'

'Thanks,' said Job, 'don't trouble. I'm going down to Bache's farm to-morrow, and I dare say I shall come across him there. Good night.'

He nodded about him, and was gone, smiling still.

'I'd like to be theer,' said one of the bar loungers, 'if so be as Mr. Round should meet him. See how he luffed when he went out? I'll bet as theer's a good tek-down awaitin' that feller, Mr. Whittaker.'

'Thomas,' said Job to himself, as he crossed the street, still smiling, 'you are as indiscreet as ever. And how I shall surprise you, to be sure.'

CHAPTER III.

MR. BOWLING, all on a July morning early, armed himself with a billhook, and, drawing on a pair of hedger's gloves, went forth, in obedience to instructions, to trim the hedge which parted his employer's garden from the roadway. There had been a passing

thunderstorm in the night, and the whole country side, as it presented itself to Mr. Bowling's gaze, looked as if it had been clean washed and dressed in its gala clothes for a general holiday. The scent of the fields and the fresh earth was singularly mild and sweet, and he took in the pleasant morning air in great gulps as if he were greedy of it. With a leisurely manner he swung himself up into the end of the thick-grown hedge, and began to chop there at the too-luxurious branches, pausing every now and then to look about him as if he owned the landscape, and, on the whole, was inclined to be pleased with it.

He had been at work in this easy-going fashion for, perhaps, half-an-hour, when he drew off his gloves, and, taking a short black clay from the band of his rusty hat, he struck a lucifer match upon his corduroy trousers, and gave a rejoicing suck or two, with the flame of the match at the bowl of the pipe. Then he took another look about him, and reached out a hand for one of the discarded gloves. Drawing this slowly on, he moved round to enlarge his view of the landscape, and on a sudden his eyes became fixed, and his whole countenance was suffused with an expression of the most intense amazement. His pipe fell from his mouth, his hands dropped to his sides, and he stood staring like a man possessed. Five or six yards away was Job Round, with a cigar cocked upwards from one corner of his mouth. He had taken a seat on the stump of a felled pollard in the midst of a circle of grass by the brook side, and, bending forward with a light stick held in both hands between his knees, he regarded Mr. Bowling with an eye of waggish amusement.

'By the Lord!' said Mr. Bowling, 'I've come upon him.'

'Good morning,' said Job, in a casual tone. 'Nice weather, isn't it?' His voice was steady enough, but his eyes were alight with humour. Perhaps the humour was of a rather mischievous cast. There was something in the look which bred a change in Mr. Bowling's aspect anyhow, and that gentleman's expression changed from unmixed amazement to a doubtful discomfort. He dropped from the bank, picked up his fallen pipe, took a pull at it to see that it was still alight, and then took to staring again at Job as if he were an apparition from another world.

'I've come upon him,' he said again, after a lengthy pause; 'and I should have known him anywhere. Johnny, old pal, how are you? It does a man's heart good to come across a chum like this, after the expierance of a quarter of a centry.'

'I thought you'd like to see me,' Job answered, with the mischievous smile still twinkling in his grey eyes. 'I was told you were to be found here, and I thought I'd give you the pleasure of a look at me. You don't seem to enjoy it nearly as much as I expected. You don't *look* as if it "did a man's heart good to come across a chum like this after the expierance of a quarter of a centry."' I'm afraid you're a bit of a flatterer, William, and that you don't greatly care to see me, after all.'

'Thomas,' said Mr. Bowling, correcting him in a surly way. 'Thomas Bowling; so christened at the port of Plymouth, in the year eighteen hundred.'

'And William Dean,' returned his companion, with humorous gravity; 'so christened at the port of Bristol. Wasn't it Bristol, William? And Robert Harford; so christened at the port of Liverpool. Was it Liverpool, Robert? Or London? I forget, "after the expierance of a quarter of a centry."'

'You ain't altered much,' said Mr. Bowling, staring at him gloomily. 'I should have knowed you anywheres.'

'And I should have known you also,' answered Job. 'But then, I marked you when I saw you last, and I recognise my own handiwork quite naturally.'

Mr. Bowling, still staring gloomily at Job, passed the middle finger of his left hand along the scar which disfigured his countenance, beginning at the forehead and ending at the lip. Then he traced it slowly back again.

'Make sure it's there, William,' said Job Round, with a somewhat savage badinage.

'Johnny,' said Mr. Bowling, 'let bygones be bygones. You can't deny as I was fair entitled to a half. Nayther can you deny, Johnny, as I never had so much as one piastre. I do look forrad to you for the fair thing now as I've happened upon you. I've had hard lines of it, roughing it everywheres, while you've been a-lying in the lap of plenty. Twelve 'ears afore the mahst, ill found, ill pervisioned, and wuss officered all along. Then the diggin's, and as bad off there as ever. And you in the lap of plenty. Yes, Johnny, now as I have lighted upon you I must tell you as I do expect fair doos.'

'And may I ask,' said Job, with a smile which grew second by second more wicked in expression, 'may I ask what is your notion of fairness, now?'

'Why, certainly you may, Johnny,' returned Mr. Bowling,

with the manner of one who is ostentatiously open to the voice of reason. 'Halves is my notion of what the fair thing 'd be.'

'Halves?' demanded Job, with a look by this time grown menacing.

'Yes, Johnny,' replied Mr. Bowling, with a wandering eye. 'Halves 'd be the fair thing if we was to take it strict. The interest,' he added, with a clumsy pretence of making a generous allowance, 'is a thing I should leave for your own notions of what is the right way to deal with a old companion.'

'Considerate and generous to a fault, as you always were,' said Job. 'And you really assure me that you would not press for interest?'

'I should not, so to say, press for it,' Mr. Bowling answered. 'I should, upon the contrary, leave it with you, free to deal with as you seen proper.'

'I do not know enough how to admire you,' said Job, knocking the ash from his cigar with the end of his walking cane. Mr. Bowling ignored this compliment, and his wandering eyes were more uncertain in their gaze than ever. He made an effort to fix them upon Job's, but they slid away again to the sky, the fields, the road, the hedge, the brook, and rested upon nothing they could find.

'Bonnyvencher,' he said, after a while, 'took a fifth of the 'ole before he came into his fair share, as was arranged. Then him and the Greek shared half, and you and me was to have shared half.'

'Do you remember why we didn't share?'

The questioner was on his feet, and with a stride or two was standing face to face with Mr. Bowling.

'Look at me,' he said, taking the sailor by the beard, and so holding him. 'Look at me. Do you remember why we didn't share?' Mr. Bowling's slippery glance just touched him once, and shot away from him. 'Do you remember,' Job asked a third time, speaking slowly and distinctly, 'why we didn't share?' Mr. Bowling made no answer, and Job, still holding him by the beard, shook him slowly, but very strongly, to and fro.

'Johnny,' he said feebly, 'you're a-hurting of me.'

'You thought it would be a great deal nicer not to share, didn't you, William? You thought, when we lay at that little khan at Strigli, that you saw your way to the lot, didn't you? But you are not a chemist, William, and arsenic taken in an over-

dose acts as an emetic. You know that now, don't you? That's a fact in medicine which will cling to your memory, my William, as long as my reminder of it adorns your countenance.' He shook Mr. Bowling so by beard at this point that his teeth chattered through the stem of the black clay, and the bowl, glancing from Job's arm, fell and broke in the roadway. Mr. Bowling's eye sought the shards and rested on them whilst Job went on: 'And you're vapouring about your buried treasure still? Now, I've a promise to make to you about that. You never knew me break my word yet, William, did you?'

'I can't say I ever did, Johnny,' returned Mr. Bowling, with great mildness.

'And you never will,' said Job. 'Now,'—very distinctly and with a shake at almost every word—'you speak a syllable about that matter any more and I'll finish you. I make myself quite clear to you, William?'

'I can't say you don't, Johnny,' said Mr. Bowling, still eyeing the shards. 'But I shouldn't make you out no worse if I wasn't shook so.'

Job gave him a final shake and released him.

'I shall find a way to quiet you if you speak another word about that. And you'll know me, you'll talk about me, you'll breathe my name to anybody known to me when you are tired of life, but not before. There's no mistake in your mind as to what I mean, is there, William? No point that stands in need of clearing up?'

'Oh dear no, Johnny,' Mr. Bowling answered, with a backward step or two.

'That is well,' said Job. 'When you are quite tired of living, William, you can begin about the buried treasure once more, or you can tell a friend you know me, and I'll attend to you without loss of time.'

With that he turned about slowly and walked away. Mr. Bowling, looking after him with a crestfallen visage, suddenly plucked up heart of grace enough to follow him.

'Johnny,' he said submissively, 'you've had your say, and I've been quiet all along. I ain't a-going to breathe a synnable nayther, but I'm a older man than you, and I'm a-getting on in 'ears, I am, and where's my pervision for old age? And you in the lap of plenty all along.' He ventured to look at Job at this point, and the smile he saw seemed to freeze him for a moment, but after a pause he dared to go on again. 'I don't ask for half,

Johnny—no, nor yet a quarter. But isn't there nothing for a old chum ?'

'I'm afraid there's nothing for the old chum,' Job answered, taking Mr. Bowling by the beard once more—'nothing. People who want to be kindly remembered should not administer arsenic to their companions, William. In your day the curriculum of the workhouse school did not include lessons in chemistry, and for that oversight of the authorities you suffer, even in your old age.'

'Not a pound a week ?' demanded Mr. Bowling. 'Not twenty shillin' a week, to keep a pal from the workus ?'

'Not a dry crust to keep a pal from dying of starvation, William,' said Job, with a dreadful playfulness which frightened the other more than any violence or bluster would have done. 'You will find it safer not to follow me another foot, or to speak another word to me.'

Mr. Bowling stood stock still and silent, and Job Round went his way in earnest this time. The old chum watched him until he rounded the corner, and stood staring vacantly in the same direction for a long time after he had disappeared.

'If I'd knowed,' said Mr. Bowling then, rubbing at the back of his neck to take the stiffness out of it—'if I'd knowed as he was in the neighbourhood, I'd ha' steered clear of it. And yet I shou'dn't ha' thought as he'd ha' been so bitter. And I was a pretty donkey, to be sure, to snap at the shadder an' lose the substance in that sort of a manner.'

Mr. Bowling's appetite for work—never very exigent—was altogether spoiled, and he sat him upon the bank below the hedge and surveyed the landscape with a look of weary disgust. In the meantime Job strolled homewards with quite an impassive look, nodding a salutation here and there to an early-rising acquaintance. By the time he reached his own door the sun was pretty high, and the long summer day had set in severely. The shaded room in which the breakfast table was arranged was a picture of cool neatness. The smooth, uncarpeted red quarries of the floor, the snow-white linen, the live plants and flowers that filled the wide fireplace, and the rustling, sunlit greenery out of doors were all pleasant to the eye, and all carried with them a pleasant sense of coolness. Job looked upon these things, and heaved a great sigh as he threw his hat and cane carelessly upon a sofa, and bestowed his own massive figure in a lounging chair.

A second or two later Sarah came in with a vase of fresh-gathered flowers, which she set upon the table.

'You were out early this morning, father,' she said brightly.

'By Jove!' said Job, sitting bolt upright and looking at her from head to foot, 'you're growing to be an uncommonly handsome woman, my dear.'

'You dear old goose,' said Sarah in response, and, crossing over to him, she bent down and kissed his brown forehead. 'You mustn't take to spoiling me.'

'I suppose you found out the truth about that matter before I did,' returned her father. 'It came upon me as a sort of surprise, my dear. You're growing into a woman, and an uncommonly goodlooking one into the bargain.'

She dragged at him by both hands and led him gaily to the table, where she sat down opposite to him and began to pour out the coffee. He, leaning his massive arms upon the table, watched her with an affectionately observant smile, thinking, with fatherly pride, how well she justified his praises. And, indeed, you might have walked a long way without meeting another such piece of feminine majesty and sweetness. Her polished white arms were well-nigh as massive as her father's, and her firm, round throat was like a marble column. But the large-limbed, generous mould in which her figure was cast had not a line of coarseness in it, and was to the full as fine as if she had been modelled in the slenderest proportions. Her face had a sort of artless courage in its expression which was very womanly and engaging, and her look commonly alternated between a mild seriousness and a dimpled mischief.

Just now, beneath her father's persistent gaze, it wore neither of these expressions, but a very becoming blush settled upon it, and seemed to make the downcast eyelids a little heavy. She raised her brown eyes shyly for a moment and dropped them again.

'My lass,' said Job, taking the cup she proffered him and holding it at arm's length as he spoke, 'a father can never altogether fill a mother's place, but you've never had any doubt of my affection for you?'

'No,' she answered, with an accent of surprise which made the denial a hundred times more emphatic.

'I have always meant that we should be close friends,' said Job, setting the cup before him, 'and if you had had the misfor-

tune to be born a lad'—he put that in to save his speech from too much seriousness, and spoke the words with half a laugh in his voice—'we should have found it easier and easier as you grew up. But a tough-hided hippopotamus of an old fellow like me can't expect to have a swan for his constant companion, even if he and the swan do swim in the same family waters. You're growing up to be a woman, Sarah, and there's just a chance of our being pushed apart——'

'How can you say so, father?' cried the girl, in a pained voice.

'There's a chance of it, my dear,' he said slowly. 'There's a certainty of it, unless we both take care. We mustn't lose each other's confidence, sweetheart, that's all. You'll be having sweethearts by-and-by, and having 'em in plenty, unless I'm much mistaken. And when you come to favour one of 'em'—he stretched his hand across the table and pinched her ear—'you must let the old dad know who it is, and take him into confidence.'

He spoke lightly, and with a manner more than half jocular, but he was serious enough for all that, and perhaps his daughter knew it. In any case the blush mantled higher on her face, and she took an unusual and unnecessary interest in the pattern of the table-cloth, tracing the Greek key upon it with a pink-flushed finger-nail. Suddenly she shook her head as if to shake away the shyness that oppressed her, though when she looked at him her eyes were still heavy with it as if with sleep.

'You won't want to know before I know myself, will you?' she asked, with a transparent pretence of impudence.

'I foresaw that difficulty,' he answered. 'It *is* a difficulty, but it is to be got over. And the way to get over it is to have no pretences, dear, no needless hiding of the thing. If a lad comes a-courting, Sarah, let him come to the old man's fireside like a lad who knows his mind, and has no right to be ashamed of himself.'

The girl made no answer, but a man who flattered himself upon his knowledge of the sex might have thought that she looked a little guilty. A young woman can defend her lips when she happens to be built on the lines of Juno, and there were not many young men in Castle Barfield who would have found it an easy task to snatch a kiss from Sarah if she had been disposed to resist him. It was a place where a kiss was not greatly thought of, and the swains and damsels of the district would have a

right hearty tussle over the attempt at such a salute upon occasion, with the seniors laughing and looking on. But no young man had ever ventured on that enterprise with Miss Round—except it were beneath the harmless mistletoe or in the last figure of Sir Roger de Coverley at Christmas time—until that identical morning.

Aaron had arisen early, and, finding the cowherd of the Barfield Arms already astir and away to the field with his pails, had slipped out at the back gates in his company, and, having sighted Job Round's dreaded figure and watched it into distance, had dared to approach the cottage and to throw a pebble or two at Sarah's window. Now, even according to Castle Barfield etiquette, that is going a long way with a young lady, and may fairly be regarded as equivalent to a declaration of intentions. Aaron had never made such a stride before, and he trembled for the result, but if Sarah chose to offer no remark upon it, but to greet him when she came out upon the garden path as if he had chosen the very commonest way of making a morning call, he might surely believe himself welcome. And in courtships one thing has such a knack of leading to another. From throwing pebbles at a young woman's bedroom window to kissing a young woman's fingers is an advance so natural and so easy, that one might fairly wonder if the one had never followed the other before the day of Aaron and Sarah. It is likely enough that the advance from the fingers to the lips was made before the earliest days of Castle Barfield.

Job was unsuspecting, and over-inclined to believe in the weight of his own authority. He had expressed a very unfavourable opinion of Mr. Aaron Whittaker only yesterday afternoon, and Sarah would naturally take that opinion into consideration, and, if she had any fancy in the young man's favour, would of course abandon it. It never entered his mind that a lover's kiss had brought so much of the woman into his daughter's face that he himself had seen and noted it.

Sitting in his garden that afternoon, beneath a hoary and gnarled old apple tree, with his pipe in his mouth and a volume of Shakespeare in his hands, he read tranquilly through the tragedy of 'Hamlet,' until he came upon that curious question propounded by King Claudius—'Can one be pardoned and retain the offence?' He dropped the book upon the grass, and took to striding to and fro with his shaggy red-brown eyebrows close knitted.

"Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children," he muttered, "even unto the second and third generation." It's no use fighting against *that*. The money was ill come by, and there's blood upon it, thieves and scoundrels as the fellows were. That rascal's turning up again has brought it all back into my mind as fresh as if it were yesterday. Sarah's innocent. It isn't as if she knew how the money came. She doesn't even know that it exists, for that matter. But will it prosper with her? "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children." She might be none the worse off if she never knew of it. As for me, I've run up my score, and I must pay it. I shan't run whining at the finish, trying to slink in with the fellows who have played squarely all their lives. Though where *they* are I don't know; I never met 'em. Armstrong's one, perhaps; the only one I ever knew. And Grace—poor Grace! And Sarah; she's a good girl, and a Christian into the bargain. There may be many.'

Up and down, up and down the smiling garden, all dappled with shine and shade. The solid, resolute footstep, the bent head, and the face frowning with intense thought gave no hint of the tremendous storm which raged within the man. The words he muttered gave no adumbration of it.

(*To be continued.*)

A VERY OLD MASTER.

THE work of art which lies before me is old, unquestionably old; a good deal older, in fact, than Archbishop Ussher (who invented all out of his own archiepiscopal head the date commonly assigned for the creation of the world) would by any means have been ready to admit. It is a bas-relief by an old master, considerably more antique in origin than the most archaic gem or intaglio in the Museo Borbonico at Naples, the mildly decorous Louvre in Paris, or the eminently respectable British Museum, which is the glory of our own smoky London in the spectacled eyes of German professors, all put together. When Assyrian sculptors carved in fresh white alabaster the flowing curls of Sennacherib's hair, just like a modern coachman's wig, this work of primæval art was already hoary with the rime of ages. When Memphian artists were busy in the morning twilight of time with the towering coiffure of Ramses or Sesostris, this far more ancient relic of plastic handicraft was lying, already fossil and forgotten, beneath the concreted floor of a cave in the Dordogne. If we were to divide the period for which we possess authentic records of man's abode upon this oblate spheroid into ten epochs—an epoch being a good high-sounding word which doesn't commit one to any definite chronology in particular—then it is probable that all known art, from the Egyptian onward, would fall into the tenth of the epochs thus loosely demarcated, while my old French bas-relief would fall into the first. To put the date quite succinctly, I should say it was most likely about 244,000 years before the creation of Adam according to Ussher.

The work of the old master is lightly incised on reindeer horn, and represents two horses, of a very early and heavy type, following one another, with heads stretched forward, as if sniffing the air suspiciously in search of enemies. The horses would certainly excite unfavourable comment at Newmarket. Their 'points' are undoubtedly coarse and clumsy: their heads are big, thick, stupid, and ungainly; their manes are bushy and ill-defined; their legs are distinctly feeble and spindle-shaped; their tails more closely resemble the tail of the domestic pig than that of the noble animal beloved with a love passing the love of women by the

English aristocracy. Nevertheless there is little (if any) reason to doubt that my very old master did, on the whole, accurately represent the ancestral steed of his own exceedingly remote period. There were once horses even as is the horse of the prehistoric Dordonian artist. Such clumsy, big-headed brutes, dun in hue and striped down the back like modern donkeys, did actually once roam over the low plains where Paris now stands, and browse off lush grass and tall water-plants around the quays of Bordeaux and Lyons. Not only do the bones of the contemporary horses, dug up in caves, prove this, but quite recently the Russian traveller Prjevalsky (whose name is so much easier to spell than to pronounce) has discovered a similar living horse, which drags on an obscure existence somewhere in the high tablelands of Central Asia. Prjevalsky's horse (you see, as I have only to write the word, without uttering it, I don't mind how often or how intrepidly I use it) is so singularly like the clumsy brutes that sat, or rather stood, for their portraits to my old master that we can't do better than begin by describing him *in propria persona*.

The horse family of the present day is divided, like most other families, into two factions, which may be described for variety's sake as those of the true horses and the donkeys, these latter including also the zebras, quaggas, and various other unfamiliar creatures whose names, in very choice Latin, are only known to the more diligent visitors at the Sunday Zoo. Now everybody must have noticed that the chief broad distinction between these two great groups consists in the feathering of the tail. The domestic donkey, with his near congeners, the zebra and co., have smooth short-haired tails, ending in a single bunch or fly-whisk of long hairs collected together in a tufted bundle at the extreme tip. The horse, on the other hand, besides having horny patches or callosities on both fore and hind legs, while the donkeys have them on the fore legs only, has a hairy tail, in which the long hairs are almost equally distributed from top to bottom, thus giving it its peculiarly bushy and brushy appearance. But Prjevalsky's horse, as one would naturally expect from an early intermediate form, stands halfway in this respect between the two groups, and acts the thankless part of a family mediator; for it has most of its long tail-hairs collected in a final flourish, like the donkey, but several of them spring from the middle distance, as in the genuine Arab, though never from the very top, thus

showing an approach to the true horsey habit without actually attaining that final pinnacle of equine glory. So far as one can make out from the somewhat rude handicraft of my prehistoric Phidias the horse of the quaternary epoch had much the same caudal peculiarity; his tail was bushy, but only in the lower half. He was still in the intermediate stage between horse and donkey, a natural mule still struggling up aspiringly toward perfect horsehood. In all other matters the two creatures—the cave man's horse and Prjevalsky's—closely agree. Both display large heads, thick necks, coarse manes, and a general disregard of 'points' which would strike disgust and dismay into the stout breasts of Messrs. Tattersall. In fact over a T.Y.C. it may be confidently asserted, in the pure Saxon of the sporting papers, that Prjevalsky's and the cave man's lot wouldn't be in it. Nevertheless a candid critic would be forced to admit that, in spite of clumsiness, they both mean staying.

So much for the two sitters; now let us turn to the artist who sketched them. Who was he, and when did he live? Well, his name, like that of many other old masters, is quite unknown to us; but what does that matter so long as his work itself lives and survives? Like the Comtists he has managed to obtain objective immortality. The work, after all, is for the most part all we ever have to go upon. 'I have my own theory about the authorship of the Iliad and Odyssey,' said Lewis Carroll (of 'Alice in Wonderland') once in Christ Church common room: 'it is that they weren't really written by Homer, but by another person of the same name.' There you have the Iliad in a nutshell as regards the authenticity of great works. All we know about the supposed Homer (if anything) is that he was the reputed author of the two unapproachable Greek epics; and all we know directly about my old master, viewed personally, is that he once carved with a rude flint flake on a fragment of reindeer horn these two clumsy prehistoric horses. Yet by putting two and two together we can make, not four, as might be naturally expected, but a fairly connected history of the old master himself and what Mr. Herbert Spencer would no doubt playfully term 'his environment.'

The work of art was dug up from under the firm concreted floor of a cave in the Dordogne. That cave was once inhabited by the nameless artist himself, his wife, and family. It had been previously tenanted by various other early families, as well as by

bears, who seem to have lived there in the intervals between the different human occupiers. Probably the bears ejected the men, and the men in turn ejected the bears, by the summary process of eating one another up. In any case the freehold of the cave was at last settled upon our early French artist. But the date of his occupancy is by no means recent; for since he lived there the long cold spell known as the Great Ice Age, or Glacial Epoch, has swept over the whole of Northern Europe, and swept before it the shivering descendants of my poor prehistoric old master. Now, how long ago was the Great Ice Age? As a rule, if you ask a geologist for a definite date, you will find him very chary of giving you a distinct answer. He knows that the chalk is older than the London clay, and the oolite than the chalk, and the red marl than the oolite; and he knows also that each of them took a very long time indeed to lay down, but exactly how long he has no notion. If you say to him, 'Is it a million years since the chalk was deposited?' he will answer, like the old lady of Prague, whose ideas were excessively vague, 'Perhaps.' If you suggest five millions, he will answer oracularly once more, 'Perhaps;' and if you go on to twenty millions, 'Perhaps,' with a broad smile, is still the only confession of faith that torture will wring out of him. But in the matter of the Glacial Epoch, a comparatively late and almost historical event, geologists have broken through their usual reserve on this chronological question and condescended to give us a numerical determination. And here is how Dr. Croll gets at it.

Every now and again, geological evidence goes to show us, a long cold spell occurs in the northern or southern hemisphere. During these long cold spells the ice cap at the poles increases largely, till it spreads over a great part of what are now the temperate regions of the globe, and makes ice a mere drug in the market as far south as Covent Garden or the Halles at Paris. During the greatest extension of this ice sheet in the last glacial epoch, in fact, all England except a small south-western corner (about Torquay and Bournemouth) was completely covered by one enormous mass of glaciers, as is still the case with almost the whole of Greenland. The ice sheet, grinding slowly over the hills and rocks, smoothed and polished and striated their surfaces in many places till they resembled the *roches moutonnées* similarly ground down in our own day by the moving ice rivers of Chamouni and Grindelwald. Now, since these great glaciations

have occurred at various intervals in the world's past history, they must depend upon some frequently recurring cause. Such a cause, therefore, Dr. Croll began ingeniously to hunt about for.

He found it at last in the eccentricity of the earth's orbit. This world of ours, though usually steady enough in its movements, is at times decidedly eccentric. Not that I mean to impute to our old and exceedingly respectable planet any occasional aberrations of intellect, or still less of morals (such as might be expected from Mars and Venus); the word is here to be accepted strictly in its scientific or Pickwickian sense as implying merely an irregularity of movement, a slight wobbling out of the established path, a deviation from exact circularity. Owing to a combination of astronomical revolutions, the precession of the equinoxes and the motion of the aphelion (I am not going to explain them here; the names alone will be quite sufficient for most people; they will take the rest on trust)—owing to the combination of these profoundly interesting causes, I say, there occur certain periods in the world's life when for a very long time together (10,500 years, to be quite precise) the northern hemisphere is warmer than the southern, or *vice versa*. Now Dr. Croll has calculated that about 250,000 years ago this eccentricity of the earth's orbit was at its highest, so that a cycle of recurring cold and warm epochs in either hemisphere alternately then set in; and such cold spells it was that produced the Great Ice Age in Northern Europe. They went on till about 80,000 years ago, when they stopped short for the present, leaving the climate of Britain and the neighbouring continent with its existing inconvenient Laodicean temperature. And, as there are good reasons for believing that my old master and his contemporaries lived just before the greatest cold of the Glacial Epoch, and that his immediate descendants, with the animals on which they feasted, were driven out of Europe, or out of existence, by the slow approach of the enormous ice sheet, we may, I think, fairly conclude that his date was somewhere about B.C. 248,000. In any case we must at least admit, with Mr. Andrew Lang, the laureate of the twenty-five thousandth century, that

He lived in the long long agoes;
'Twas the manner of primitive man.

The old master, then, carved his bas-relief in pre-Glacial Europe, just at the moment before the temporary extinction of

his race in France by the coming on of the Great Ice Age. We can infer this fact from the character of the fauna by which he was surrounded, a fauna in which species of cold and warm climates are at times quite capriciously intermingled. We get the reindeer and the mammoth side by side with the hippopotamus and the hyena; we find the chilly cave bear and the Norway lemming, the musk sheep and the Arctic fox in the same deposits with the lion and the lynx, the leopard and the rhinoceros. The fact is, as Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace has pointed out, we live to-day in a zoologically impoverished world, from which all the largest, fiercest, and most remarkable animals have lately been weeded out. And it was in all probability the coming on of the Ice Age that did the weeding. Our Zoo can boast no mammoth and no mastodon. The sabre-toothed lion has gone the way of all flesh; the deinotherium and the colossal ruminants of the Pliocene Age no longer browse beside the banks of Seine. But our old master saw the last of some at least among those gigantic quadrupeds; it was his hand or that of one among his fellows that scratched the famous mammoth etching on the ivory of La Madelaine and carved the figure of the extinct cave bear on the reindeer-horn ornaments of Laugerie Basse. Probably, therefore, he lived in the period immediately preceding the Great Ice Age, or else perhaps in one of the warm interglacial spells with which the long secular winter of the northern hemisphere was then from time to time agreeably diversified.

And what did the old master himself look like? Well, painters have always been fond of reproducing their own lineaments. Have we not the familiar young Raffael, painted by himself, and the Rembrandt, and the Titian, and the Rubens, and a hundred other self-drawn portraits, all flattering and all famous? Even so primitive man has drawn himself many times over, not indeed on this particular piece of reindeer horn, but on several other media to be seen elsewhere, in the original or in good copies. One of the best portraits is that discovered in the old cave at Laugerie Basse by M. Elie Massénat, where a very early pre-Glacial man is represented in the act of hunting an aurochs, at which he is casting a flint-tipped javelin. In this as in all other pictures of the same epoch I regret to say that the ancient hunter is represented in the costume of Adam before the fall. Our old master's studies, in fact, are all in the nude. Primitive man was evidently unacquainted as yet with the use of clothing,

though primitive woman, while still unclad, had already learnt how to heighten her natural charms by the simple addition of a necklace and bracelets. Indeed, though dresses were still wholly unknown, rouge was even then extremely fashionable among French ladies, and lumps of the ruddle with which primitive woman made herself beautiful for ever are now to be discovered in the corner of the cave where she had her little prehistoric boudoir. To return to our hunter, however, who for aught we know to the contrary may be our old master himself in person, he is a rather crouching and semi-erect savage, with an arched back, recalling somewhat that of the gorilla, a round head, long neck, pointed beard, and weak, shambling, ill-developed legs. I fear we must admit that pre-Glacial man cut, on the whole, a very sorry and awkward figure.

Was he black? That we don't certainly know, but all analogy would lead one to answer positively, Yes. White men seem, on the whole, to be a very recent and novel improvement on the original evolutionary pattern. At any rate he was distinctly hairy, like the Ainos, or aborigines of Japan, in our own day, of whom Miss Isabella Bird has drawn so startling and sensational a picture. Several of the pre-Glacial sketches show us lank and gawky savages with the body covered with long scratches, answering exactly to the scratches which represent the hanging hair of the mammoth, and suggesting that man then still retained his old original hairy covering. The few skulls and other fragments of skeletons now preserved to us also indicate that our old master and his contemporaries much resembled in shape and build the Australian black fellows, though their foreheads were lower and more receding, while their front teeth still projected in huge fangs, faintly recalling the immense canines of the male gorilla. Quite apart from any theoretical considerations as to our probable descent (or ascent) from Mr. Darwin's hypothetical 'hairy arboreal quadrumanous ancestor,' whose existence may or may not be really true, there can be no doubt that the actual historical remains set before us pre-Glacial man as evidently approaching in several important respects the higher monkeys.

It is interesting to note too that while the Men of the Time still retained (to be frankly evolutionary) many traces of the old monkey-like progenitor, the horses which our old master has so cleverly delineated for us on his scrap of horn similarly retained many traces of the earlier united horse-and-donkey ancestor. Pro-

fessor Huxley has admirably reconstructed for us the pedigree of the horse, beginning with a little creature from the Eocene beds of New Mexico, with five toes to each hind foot, and ending with the modern horse, whose hoof is now practically reduced to a single and solid-nailed toe. Intermediate stages show us an Upper Eocene animal as big as a fox, with four toes on his front feet and three behind; a Miocene kind as big as a sheep, with only three toes on the front foot, the two outer of which are smaller than the big middle one; and finally a Pliocene form, as big as a donkey, with one stout middle toe, the real hoof, flanked by two smaller ones, too short by far to reach the ground. In our own horse these lateral toes have become reduced to what are known by veterinaries as splint bones, combined with the canon in a single solidly morticed piece. But in the pre-Glacial horses the splint bones still generally remained quite distinct, thus pointing back to the still earlier period when they existed as two separate and independent side toes in the ancestral quadruped. In a few cave specimens, however, the splints are found united with the canons in a single piece, while conversely horses are sometimes, though very rarely, born at the present day with three-toed feet, exactly resembling those of their half-forgotten ancestor the Pliocene hipparion.

The reason why we know so much about the horses of the cave period is, I am bound to admit, simply and solely because the man of the period ate them. Hippophagy has always been popular in France; it was practised by pre-Glacial man in the caves of Périgord, and revived with immense enthusiasm by the gourmets of the Boulevards after the siege of Paris and the hunger of the Commune. The cave men hunted and killed the wild horse of their own times, and one of the best of their remaining works of art represents a naked hunter attacking two horses, while a huge snake winds itself unperceived behind close to his heel. In this rough prehistoric sketch one seems to catch some faint antique foreshadowing of the rude humour of the 'Petit Journal pour Rire.' Some archæologists even believe that the horse was domesticated by the cave men as a source of food, and argue that the familiarity with its form shown in the drawings could only have been acquired by people who knew the animal in its domesticated state; they declare that the cave man was obviously horsey. But all the indications seem to me to show that tame animals were quite unknown in the age of the cave men. The mammoth

certainly was never domesticated ; yet there is a famous sketch of the huge beast upon a piece of his own ivory, discovered in the cave of La Madelaine by Messrs. Lartet and Christy, and engraved a hundred times in works on archæology, which forms one of the finest existing relics of pre-Glacial art. In another sketch, less well known, but not unworthy of admiration, the early artist has given us with a few rapid but admirable strokes his own reminiscence of the effect produced upon him by the sudden onslaught of the hairy brute, tusks erect and mouth wide open, a perfect glimpse of elephantine fury. It forms a capital example of early impressionism, respectfully recommended to the favourable attention of Mr. J. M. Whistler.

The reindeer, however, formed the favourite food and favourite model of the pre-Glacial artists. Perhaps it was a better sitter than the mammoth ; certainly it is much more frequently represented on these early prehistoric bas-reliefs. The high-water mark of palæolithic art is undoubtedly to be found in the reindeer of the cave of Thayngen, in Switzerland, a capital and spirited representation of a buck grazing, in which the perspective of the two horns is better managed than a Chinese artist would manage it at the present day. Another drawing of two reindeer fighting, scratched on a fragment of schistose rock and unearthed in one of the caves of Périgord, though far inferior to the Swiss specimen in spirit and execution, is yet not without real merit. The perspective, however, displays one marked infantile trait, for the head and legs of one deer are seen distinctly through the body of another. Cave bears, fish, musk sheep, foxes, and many other extinct or existing animals are also found among the archaic sculptures. Probably all these creatures were used as food ; and it is even doubtful whether the artistic troglodytes were not also confirmed cannibals. To quote Mr. Andrew Lang once more on primitive man, 'he lived in a cave by the seas ; he lived upon oysters and foes.' The oysters are quite undoubted, and the foes may be inferred with considerable certainty.

I have spoken of our old master more than once under this rather question-begging style and title of primitive man. In reality, however, the very facts which I have here been detailing serve themselves to show how extremely far our hero was from being truly primitive. You can't speak of a distinguished artist, who draws the portraits of extinct animals with grace and accuracy, as in any proper sense primordial. Grant that our good troglodytes

were indeed light-hearted cannibals; nevertheless they could design far better than the modern Esquimaux or Polynesians, and carve far better than the civilised being who is now calmly discoursing about their personal peculiarities in his own study. Between the cave men of the pre-Glacial age and the hypothetical hairy quadrumanous ancestor aforesaid there must have intervened innumerable generations of gradually improving intermediate forms. The old master, when he first makes his bow to us, naked and not ashamed, in his Swiss or French grotto, flint scalpel in hand and necklet of bear's teeth dropping loosely on his hairy bosom, is nevertheless in all essentials a completely evolved human being, with a whole past of slowly acquired culture lying dimly and mysteriously behind him. Already he had invented the bow with its flint-tipped arrow, the neatly chipped javelin-head, the bone harpoon, the barbed fish-hook, the axe, the lance, the dagger, and the needle. Already he had learnt how to decorate his implements with artistic skill, and to carve the handles of his knives with the figures of animals. I have no doubt that he even knew how to brew and to distil; and he was probably acquainted with the noble art of cookery as applied to the persons of his human fellow creatures. Such a personage cannot reasonably be called primitive; cannibalism, as somebody has rightly remarked, is the first step on the road to civilisation.

No, if we want to get at genuine, unadulterated primitive man we must go much further back in time than the mere trifle of 250,000 years with which Dr. Croll and the cosmic astronomers so generously provide us for pre-Glacial humanity. We must turn away to the immeasurably earlier fire-split flints which the Abbé Bourgeois—undaunted mortal!—ventured to discover among the Miocene strata of the *calcaire de Beauce*. Those flints, if of human origin at all, were fashioned by some naked and still more hairy creature who might fairly claim to be considered as genuinely primitive. So rude are they that, though evidently artificial, one distinguished archæologist will not admit they can be in any way human; he will have it that they were really the handiwork of the great European anthropoid ape of that early period. This, however, is nothing more than very delicate hair-splitting; for what does it matter whether you call the animal that fashioned these exceedingly rough and fire-marked implements a man-like ape or an ape-like human being? The fact remains quite unaltered, whichever name you choose to give to it. When you have

got to a monkey who can light a fire and proceed to manufacture himself a convenient implement, you may be sure that man, noble man, with all his glorious and admirable faculties—cannibal or otherwise—is lurking somewhere very close just round the corner. The more we examine the work of our old master, in fact, the more does the conviction force itself upon us that he was very far indeed from being primitive—that we must push back the early history of our race not for 250,000 winters alone, but perhaps for two or three million years into the dim past of Tertiary ages.

But if pre-Glacial man is thus separated from the origin of the race by a very long interval indeed, it is none the less true that he is separated from our own time by the intervention of a vast blank space, the space occupied by the coming on and passing away of the Glacial Epoch. A great gap cuts him off from what we may consider as the relatively modern age of the mound-builders, whose grassy barrows still cap the summits of our southern chalk downs. When the great ice sheet drove away palæolithic man—the man of the caves and the unwrought flint axes—from Northern Europe, he was still nothing more than a naked savage in the hunting stage, divinely gifted for art, indeed, but armed only with roughly chipped stone implements, and wholly ignorant of taming animals or of the very rudiments of agriculture. He knew nothing of the use of metals—*aurum irrepertum spernere fortior*—and he had not even learnt how to grind and polish his rude stone tomahawks to a finished edge. He couldn't make himself a bowl of sun-baked pottery, and if he had discovered the almost universal art of manufacturing an intoxicating liquor from grain or berries (for, as Byron, with too great anthropological truth, justly remarks, 'man, being reasonable, *must* get drunk') he at least drank his aboriginal beer or toddy from the capacious horn of a slaughtered aurochs. That was the kind of human being who alone inhabited France and England during the later pre-Glacial period.

A hundred and seventy thousand years elapse (as the play bills put it), and then the curtain rises afresh upon neolithic Europe. Man meanwhile, loitering somewhere behind the scenes in Asia or Africa (as yet imperfectly explored from this point of view), had acquired the important arts of sharpening his tomahawks and producing hand-made pottery for his kitchen utensils. When the great ice sheet cleared away he followed the returning summer into Northern Europe, another man, physically, intellectually, and morally, with all the slow accumulations of nearly two thousand

centuries (how easily one writes the words ! how hard to realise them !) upon his maturer shoulders. Then comes the age of what older antiquaries used to regard as primitive antiquity—the age of the English barrows, of the Danish kitchen middens, of the Swiss lake dwellings. The men who lived in it had domesticated the dog, the cow, the sheep, the goat, and the invaluable pig ; they had begun to sow small ancestral wheat and undeveloped barley ; they had learnt to weave flax and wear decent clothing ; in a word, they had passed from the savage hunting condition to the stage of barbaric herdsmen and agriculturists. That is a comparatively modern period, and yet I suppose we must conclude with Dr. James Geikie that it isn't to be measured by mere calculations of ten or twenty centuries, but of ten or twenty thousand years. The perspective of the past is opening up rapidly before us ; what looked quite close yesterday is shown to-day to lie away off somewhere in the dim distance. Like our palæolithic artists, we fail to get the reindeer fairly behind the ox in the foreground, as we ought to do if we saw the whole scene properly foreshortened.

On the table where I write there lie two paper weights, preserving from the fate of the sibylline leaves the sheets of foolscap to which this article is now being committed. One of them is a very rude flint hatchet, produced by merely chipping off flakes from its side by dexterous blows, and utterly unpolished or unground in any way. It belongs to the age of the very old master (or possibly even to a slightly earlier epoch), and it was sent me from Ightham, in Kent, by that indefatigable unearther of prehistoric memorials, Mr. Benjamin Harrison. That flint, which now serves me in the office of a paper weight, is far ruder, simpler, and more ineffective than any weapon or implement at present in use among the lowest savages. Yet with it, I doubt not, some naked black fellow by the banks of the Thames has hunted the mammoth among unbroken forests two hundred thousand years ago and more ; with it he has faced the angry cave bear and the original and only genuine British lion (for everybody knows that the existing mongrel heraldic beast is nothing better than a bastard modification of the leopard of the Plantagenets). Nay, I have very little doubt in my own mind that with it some æsthetic ancestor has brained and cut up for use his next-door neighbour in the nearest cavern, and then carved upon his well-picked bones an interesting sketch of the entire performance. The Du Mauriers

of that remote age, in fact, habitually drew their society pictures upon the personal remains of the mammoth or the man whom they wished to caricature in deathless bone-cuts. The other paper weight is a polished neolithic tomahawk, belonging to the period of the mound-builders, who succeeded the Glacial Epoch, and it measures the distance between the two levels of civilisation with great accuracy. It is the military weapon of a trained barbaric warrior as opposed to the universal implement and utensil of a rude, solitary, savage hunter. Yet how curious it is that even in the midst of this 'so-called nineteenth century,' which perpetually proclaims itself an age of progress, men should still prefer to believe themselves inferior to their original ancestors, instead of being superior to them! The idea that man has risen is considered base, degrading, and positively wicked; the idea that he has fallen is considered to be immensely inspiring, ennobling, and beautiful. For myself, I have somehow always preferred the boast of the Homeric Glaucus that we indeed maintain ourselves to be much better men than ever were our fathers.



RECOLLECTIONS OF BUDDHIST MONASTERIES.

Of the many strange phases of life of which I obtained glimpses in the course of a year's wandering in China and Japan, none was to me more curious than the strangely dreamy monasticism which has been embraced by so very large a proportion of the inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, and, indeed, of every country where Buddhism has held sway. The system appears to have found amazing favour with the early disciples of Buddha. Within three centuries of his death, we learn that in Hindoostan alone sixty-four thousand priests were supported by the imperial alms of the Emperor Asoka (B.C. 250), who convened a council of one thousand of the yellow-robed fraternity to revise the Buddhist Scriptures, and to take measures for sending missionaries into all the world, to make known to mankind the saving doctrines of Buddha. It appears, also, that the great district which we now know as Behar was really called Vihāra, *i.e.* 'The Land of Monasteries,' by reason of the multitude of such establishments.

To such an extent was this passion for the monastic life indulged in Northern India, that it appears to have been in a manner responsible for the eventual reascendancy of Brahmanism; for this reason, that while the best leaders of Buddhism were thus seeking to attain a higher sanctity by seclusion from their fellow-men, these gradually relapsed into their aboriginal devil-worship, and thereafter, Brahmanism in its present debased form became the chief religion of Hindoostan, and Buddhism was driven to seek a refuge in the wilder regions to the north, where at the present day it is estimated that about one-third of the whole population of Thibet is attached to the monasteries, either ecclesiastically or as lay brethren.

Considering how great is the merit which, by the teaching of Buddha, attaches to intense religious meditation, it seems only natural that a very large number of his followers should seek the silence of the cloister as the best aid in working out their own salvation; consequently, in every land wherein dwell the five hundred millions who in this nineteenth century profess to be his disciples, we find the prevalence of the monastic system.

During a somewhat prolonged residence in Ceylon, I had opportunities of visiting many monasteries of great interest, both ancient and modern, and retain many pleasant impressions of the courtesy of the yellow-robed brethren, a circumstance which, doubtless, gave zest to my desire for some further glimpses of the system as now practised in Japan and China. A slight sketch of personal impressions of the latter may, I trust, prove of interest at the present time.

My first visit was to that monastery which, of all others, is perhaps the most accessible to foreigners, and that wherein they are received with the greatest courtesy—namely, the Great Monastery of the Ocean Banner, at Honam, which is a suburb of Canton. My last visit was to that which of all others is most notoriously antagonistic to foreigners, and most vehemently opposed to their admission within its walls—namely, the Great Lama Temple, which lies on the north side of the city of Peking.

All the monasteries I have visited are constructed on the same general principle. The outer gateway is invariably guarded by two huge and monstrously ugly figures, while four others, equally hideous, and representing the incarnation of the genius of North, South, East, and West, occupy a second building, which is the hall of the gods. These are supposed to be the ministers of Buddha's will and pleasure. I cannot say he has displayed much taste in the selection!

Then we come to the great temple, which is a detached building in the middle of a great court, around which are cloisters, apartments for the abbot and for the monks, dormitories, a library, reception rooms for guests, halls consecrated to many Hindoo gods, all of whom are supposed to do homage to Buddha; the great refectory, and the kitchen, where, of course, vegetables only are supposed to find admission—neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, not even milk, butter, or eggs, being tolerated by the sumptuary laws of the Founder. (As regards fresh milk and butter, no Chinaman considers these fit for human food.)

These various departments are each under the special care of some divine guardian, to whom is dedicated a more or less ornamental shrine. Those of two gods, respectively named Weitō and Kwan-tai, lie to right and left of the main quadrangle, these gods being considered the special guardians of monasteries.

Kwan-tai being the god of war, must, I suppose, be reckoned as the 'Defender of the Faith.'

In the dormitories, a watchful god protects the sleepers, while in the monastic kitchen (as in that of every well-regulated family in China) the kitchen-god receives devout daily worship. The shrine of the Goddess of Mercy is invariably conspicuous—in many monasteries she has a separate temple. Some wealthy monasteries are adorned with statues of the five hundred most saintly of Buddha's original disciples. In any case there are invariably a very large number of idols of all sizes, from the tiniest to the most colossal, some of wood and some of copper, some of porcelain, some of stone, and some of clay; some gaudily painted, some lacquered, and many gilt.

But the great centre of all worship is, of course, the huge image of Buddha, who sits enthroned on a gigantic lotus blossom. In some temples he sits solitary, in others he is represented by three images, all exactly alike, representing the Past, the Present, and the Future, while another variety, more common in pictures than in images, shows him seated between two figures, equally cyclopean, apparently of beautiful women, but really representing two beloved Indian disciples, named Kashiapa and Ananda. These great central images are frequently beautiful, and convey a feeling of intense calm and repose, strangely in contrast with all the bewildering variety of extraneous gods whose noisy worship is so diametrically opposed to the whole teaching of the Founder.

Of course every monastery of any note prides itself on the possession of some relic of Buddha, which is preserved in a bell-shaped dagoba, frequently made of white marble, recalling on a very small scale the cyclopean dagobas of the ancient cities in Ceylon. These, in China, are generally kept within a special hall, but sometimes in pagodas, whose seven or nine stories are apparently designed to suggest multiplied canopies of honour, overshadowing the precious treasure below. The pagodas are not, however, necessarily relic shrines. In some cases they have been erected as tombs over the ashes of very saintly priests, and in modern days are sometimes built solely for purposes of geomancy, to improve the 'Fung-Shui' of the neighbourhood, while others are simply built to the honour of Buddha, that the tinkling of the wind-bells, which are suspended round each gallery, may contribute to the universal songs of all nature in his praise.

In some monasteries—notably in that of Honam—there are

shrines in honour of the founder of that particular institution, as also of the most noted abbots who have therein ruled. As this office is only held for three years, an abbot must be a man of rare sanctity or ability to make much mark in so limited a period. Re-election for a second term is, however, not unfrequent, but it does not follow that the most saintly abbots are the most popular. The election lies entirely in the hands of the superior priests.

Some monasteries have a private printing-press, where are printed devotional books of the Buddhist offices, and broadsheets in honour of the Goddess of Mercy, or other deities. I have several such, which were given to me in various monasteries. The method of printing is that which has been in use for many centuries: it has the advantage of extreme simplicity. The matter to be printed is cut on a block in high relief, Indian ink is then applied to the block, upon which a sheet of paper is pressed, and that is all. Where the demand is moderate and no one is in a hurry, this seems to answer very well.

In this general summary of the chief features of almost all monasteries in China, I must not omit the provision made for the meritorious saving of life, not of human beings, but of all manner of animals—birds, fishes, and reptiles. (I am not sure that I am right concerning the latter, the creatures in my mind being the multitudinous tortoises in the sacred tank at the Flowery Forest Monastery in Canton, but ever since ‘Punch’s’ railway porter characterised the tortoise as ‘a hinsect,’ I own to some mental confusion on that subject!) However, carp and sparrows, pigeons and fowls, geese and ducks, sheep, goats, and pigs, which have been presented as votive offerings, are here tenderly cared for, and eventually buried with honour. In some cases even horses, mules, and cattle are here dedicated to a life of idleness by very devout suplicants.

The Ocean Banner Monastery of which I spoke in the first instance is a very fine example of a Chinese monastery, and its temple is very imposing. But in saying this I must remind you, once for all, that neither in China nor Japan need you look for beauty of architecture in the sense generally implied by that term. These temples are, one and all, of the same type, which is simply that of the one-storeyed Indian bungalow, with its verandah and heavy roof; nevertheless some of the larger temples have a certain solemnity and a wealth of rich colour. In this Honam

temple the interest centres in three colossal gilt figures which represent the Three Buddhas, on either side of whom are ranged a number of smaller gilt statues. All the minor adjuncts of lanterns, draperies, and temple furnishings are handsome and harmonious.

I was present at the afternoon service, which, though less fully attended than that of early morning, was unquestionably a very impressive scene. About sixty monks and priests were present, instead of above a hundred; of these, some were robed in yellow, and others wore grey skirts and yellow hoods. The abbot wore a purple robe, with a mantle of crimson silk, purposely made of patched pieces to suggest the vow of poverty. He and some of the priests carried rosaries of polished black beads. Some of the chanting was rather fine, but the orchestral accompaniment was decidedly unsolemnising; shrill pipes, flutes, and wooden drums combining to produce a hideous noise. The ritual seemed to call for many genuflections and prostrations, and much rapid recitation by all present. Then all the brethren made a processional turn round the temple, sunwise; this they did several times.

The service was lengthy and we could not stay till the close, having but a limited time to spare, and I was anxious to see the cremation ground, where those who embrace the religious life are cremated, following the example of their leader. The crematory is a low tower of brick; within are four raised stones on which to rest the bamboo chair, wherein (with the monastic cowl drawn over his head, and hands placed palm to palm before his breast, as if in prayer) sits the dead monk, who, within twelve hours of his death, must be carried hither by lay brothers. He is followed to the funeral pyre by all the brethren, walking two-and-two, clothed in sackcloth, and having a white cloth bound round the head in token of woe. They have previously held solemn service in the temple for the repose of the dead, and, as the procession slowly advances, they chaunt funeral hymns. Through the narrow doorway of the crematory the chair is carried, fagots are placed beneath and all around it, and the chief priest kindles the flame, all the mourners falling prostrate with their faces to the ground while commending the mortal body to the ethereal fire.* While the body is being cremated small pieces of fragrant sandal-wood are, from time to time, thrown into the flames.

When the fire has done its work and only a few charred bones and ashes remain, these are collected in a stone jar and placed beside similar jars in a sepulchral store-house, where they remain till a certain day of the year (the ninth day of the ninth month), when each jar is emptied into a bag of red cloth. These are carefully sewn up and are then thrown through a small sort of window into a great solid granite mausoleum. There are two of these buildings in the temple grounds, but one of them may no longer be used, not for lack of room, but because it already contains about 4950 sacks of ashes, and Buddhist law forbids the storing of a larger number in one place.

The ossuary now in use is divided into two compartments, one of which is assigned to the ashes of Buddhist nuns.

It appears that there are exceptional instances when cremation is dispensed with, and ordinary burial in ponderous coffins is lawful, even for a priest. Such cases, though rare, have occurred in comparatively recent years, and some very old horse-shoe tombs in the temple grounds prove that such burials were permitted long ago. At the time of my visit these stores were being 'renewed' in a most literal sense, as the ancient inscriptions were being copied on to brand-new stones!

Leaving the cremation ground we made our way to the hall, where, in a handsome dagoba of white marble, is stored the most precious possession of the monastery—the relic of Buddha. We turned aside, however, to take a lesson on the hideous results of indolence and gluttony, in the forms of about a dozen monstrously fat sacred pigs, luxuriating in a most comfortable sty, abundance of good food, and happy security from all danger of having their natural lives curtailed.

Then we looked into the great refectory, where eight long narrow tables extend from end to end, four on each side, with benches on one side only, so placed that all the brethren shall face the centre of the hall, at one end of which sits the abbot, and at the other end an altar to some of the innumerable deities. All round the walls hang boards on which are inscribed wise maxims from the classics, whereon the brethren may ponder while silently devouring their simple meal of vegetables. It struck us that mind must indeed have triumphed over matter when hungry Chinamen could pamper pigs and fowls, without occasionally dedicating one to the service of the kitchen-god (whose shrine, by the way, occupies a conspicuous place in the monastic kitchen).

I spoke just now of the cremation of Buddhist nuns. Strange to say, though we must have visited scores of monasteries, I am not conscious of having ever entered a Buddhist convent, though these are really numerous, and we occasionally fell in with small parties of nuns, whom, however, it was difficult to distinguish from the holy brethren, save by their diminutive size. Their dress is precisely the same—namely, a long grey or yellow robe, white stockings and thick shoes, like those worn by men, and their poor bare heads are closely shaven—a process to which the little ten-year-old novices are partially subjected, and which is completed when, at the advanced age of sixteen, the full-blown sister takes the vows of perpetual virginity, of vegetarian diet, and strict obedience to the precepts of Buddha. These vows are made in presence of Koon-Yam, the Goddess of Mercy, who herself was a canonized Buddhist nun; and thenceforth the sole duty of these poor little nuns seems to lie in going from house to house, wherever their services are required on behalf of deceased women, for whose benefit they chaunt prayers to Koon-Yam the livelong day. When this exciting work is not required they are said to spend their dull lives in a state of utter vacuity, being literally without occupation, save that some of the younger sisters employ their leisure upon silk embroidery. I have seen Buddhist nuns making a pilgrimage to many shrines, never apparently pausing for one moment in the ceaseless reiteration of the four-syllabled charm, ‘O-mi-to-Fu! O-mi-to-Fu!’ You would probably have taken such for gibbering idiots, but they were only devout little nuns accumulating stores of celestial merit by ascribing praise to Fo, *alias* Buddha.

Buddhism has no monopoly of the monastic system. Taouist monasteries and Taouist nunneries also abound. The latter have a decided advantage over the Buddhist nunneries in that shaving the head is not enjoined; on the contrary, the Taouist sisters wear their long black hair fastened on the top of the head with a peculiar tortoise-shell comb, of a pattern specially designed for the use of Taouist priests. They also enjoy the privilege, so dear to all girls of good family, of showing that they have had their feet crippled in childhood, whereas the Buddhist nuns, with their great masculine black shoes, might as well have low caste full-sized feet. In point of fact, though maidens of every degree do join the sisterhoods, the majority are recruited from the lower orders.

Though I visited various other monasteries in Canton and its near neighbourhood, we may pass from thence to the district which has recently been brought into such distressing prominence—namely, the province of Fokien, and especially the city of Foochow, not far from which are situated several monasteries of note. Excursions to these, however, or to other points of interest in the neighbourhood of Foochow, have one disadvantage, at least in spring-time—namely, that whenever we emerge from the densely packed streets of the old city, we find ourselves in the midst of that most hateful form of agriculture—paddy fields—where the fresh young rice is growing in deep mud with a shallow surface of water. In and out among these flooded fields wind narrow stone paths, barely two feet in width, but often raised to a height of from four to six feet above the little lagoons of liquid mud; and when, as is frequently the case, we meet a train of heavily burdened coolies, or some foreigner or great Mandarin being carried in his chair, there comes an anxious moment as to whether we or they are most likely to be deposited ignominiously in a very undesirable mud bath! Beyond the paddy fields we find regular paved roads leading up to various points of interest in the Paeling hills, such as monasteries or tea-plantations, and at every turn in the road we have fine views looking down on the valley, where the great Min river winds like a silvery ribbon through the labyrinth of small green fields.

A very favourite expedition from the foreign settlement, on the green island of Nantai, is to a famous Buddhist monastery which nestles in a sheltered spot half way up the Kushan or Drum Mountain, which rises just above the arsenal. The mountain is 3,900 feet in height, and the monastery is about 2,000 feet above the river—a pleasant cool refuge in hot weather, and one to which the courteous monks frequently welcome foreigners desirous of a few days' change of air. A special charm of this excursion lies in the fact that the greater part of the distance is done by water, floating down the river in a comfortable house-boat in about an hour. At low tide, however, the house-boat cannot approach the landing, and it is necessary to row some distance in a small boat, and then brave the dangers of a long plank and stepping-stones across deep mud, through which the chair coolies, who accompany us, plunge, bearing our comfortable cane chairs, in which they carry us for half an hour along a narrow winding path between flooded paddy fields, where patient buffaloes and Chinamen are

ploughing knee deep in mud. Thus we arrive at the base of the mountain range, and toil up a flight of fifteen hundred stone steps, and follow paved causeways along levels through the forest, past curious ancient tombs, and then another long paved level leads us to the Kushan monastery, a large but not very picturesque group of venerable grey buildings, eight hundred years old. It is the headquarters of about three hundred monks, of whom about one hundred and fifty are generally on the spot with their abbot. The others are sent on ecclesiastical or begging work all over the country, to perform noisy and costly religious services in every house where a death has occurred, or where the mysterious illness of any inmate leads to the conclusion that the sufferer is 'possessed of devils,' who must be duly exorcised.

Passing through the great entrance hall, where there are five large gilt images, we entered the principal temple, which is very fine indeed—one of those very exceptional instances in which a temple for the worship of idols impresses one with a feeling of real solemnity. Thence we entered a court wherein all pigs, fowls, and other live stock presented as 'offerings' are allowed to live in peace and die of old age. It is an act of merit thus to secure them from all danger of being put to death, and a handsome sum is of course paid for their permanent maintenance. The monks are supposed to be such very strict vegetarians that should the hens chance to lay eggs, they (the eggs) forthwith receive decent burial! We were allowed a peep into the dormitories, which have small compartments curtained off on each side, the slumbers of the inmates being consecrated by an altar at one end of each room. The privacy thus secured is of course designed to encourage meditation and prayer, and so it doubtless does in many cases, for amongst the brethren there must be some of all sorts, as we readily inferred from the very varied types of countenance—some so calm and reflective, and many debased and sensual, fully justifying the contempt in which the majority of these holy brethren are held by the secular community.

Of the former we were told that some subject themselves to agonising penances, in their zealous determination to triumph over the poor flesh, and that, not content with fastings and flagellations, they submit to having their flesh seared with a sharp-pointed red-hot iron, one such scar denoting each monastic vow. The number of these varies in different parts of the Empire, nine or twelve being the most common. But some devout souls make a hundred and

eight vows, and endure a hundred and eight burnings to imprint those on their memory. These fiery reminders are generally made on the fore-arm, but some proclaim their devotion to all beholders by thus scarring their forehead and skull, which of course gives them the appearance of having suffered from small-pox. Others burn off a finger as a self-imposed penance.

But, on the other hand, it is well known that a very large proportion of these men assume the yellow robe late in life, to secure an easy-going idle sort of livelihood, while some herein seek an asylum from legal punishment for divers crimes. The law, however, does not recognise any right of sanctuary for murderers. Of course the vows of these unworthy brothers are continually broken, and not only are prohibited meats freely brought in for private consumption, but further, the cubicles designed for silent meditation too often witness the intoxication of the opium-pipe—an indulgence which every Chinaman, without exception, acknowledges to be an unmitigated sin, though so few who have once yielded to it have the courage to endure the physical and mental misery which invariably attends giving it up.

But so many priests of all ranks are the slaves of this most insidious of vices, that there appears to be a mutual agreement to ignore its practice in the monasteries, though certain other offences, when proven, are visited with severe corporal punishment administered by a sturdy lay brother, and the priest who has been thus degraded is condemned to beg his daily rice, and to wander from one monastery to another, receiving from each the coarsest of fare and the meanest of lodging.

We entered the refectory just as the brethren assembled in answer to the beating of a large wooden drum, shaped like a non-descript animal. All had assumed their cowls as the monastic form of dressing for dinner. Tables are arranged all round the hall, and all the monks sit with their backs to the wall, so that all may face the abbot. The laying of the table is not elaborate—two empty bowls and a pair of chop-sticks are placed for each person.

When all had taken their places, at a given signal they all rose, placing the palms of the hands together in a devotional attitude, while one of the number beat a small prayer-drum, and the abbot recited a long prayer, after which one of the monks went outside and placed a small heap of cooked rice on a red pillar, as an offering to all the minor gods who might have been

inadvertently overlooked in the general worship. Having done this, he snapped his fingers thrice, and the small gods came in the form of birds and accepted the offering. Then followed a long grace, during which an attendant went round filling each man's bowls with rice and green vegetables, which all proceeded to devour hungrily, in total silence.

Leaving the brethren to the enjoyment of this frugal fare, we found a pleasant spot outside of the monastic courts where we might indulge in a non-vegetarian luncheon without risk of shocking the stricter brethren. The sacred fish lunched at the same hour—large carp which, like the fowls and the pigs, have been rescued from death as a means of acquiring merit, and now live happily in the temple tank, and are fed at stated hours. Another form in which the same class of merit is acquired is by the purchase and release of pigeons or small caged birds, which are captured for this express purpose by special birdcatchers, who herein find a fairly lucrative profession.

Following a tempting path along the hill-side, we came to a very pretty temple of carved wood, painted deep red, with curved roofs of grey tiles. It is built right over a very narrow cleft in the rock, from beneath which there formerly flowed a rushing torrent; but its noise was so distressing to a very holy old saint who formerly lived here, that it hindered his devotions, and so he prayed that it might be silenced, and ever since then the stream has been well-nigh dried up, and only a low soothing murmur tells of the rippling waters low in the gully.

The rocks hereabouts are all covered with immense inscriptions, deeply engraven and filled with red paint. Many of these are in the old seal character, and even the most modern are in the regular Chinese character, which to the uninitiated always looks so very mysterious. It is really distressing to learn that though many of these imperishable inscriptions are really poetic aspirations, a considerable number merely record the visits of certain notable pilgrims to the monastery, and are in fact only an elaborate version of Smith or Jones's scribbles on the Pyramids and elsewhere!

A little further on we came to another very pretty open-air temple, consisting only of an ornamental much-curved roof resting on pillars, overshadowing a rock whereon are engraven and gilded a multitude of tiny gods. I believe these represent the five hundred Lohans (which in old Sanscrit hymns are called Arhans),

spiritual beings never seen of men, but whose voices are sometimes heard in these shady groves at early dawn, chaunting the praises of Buddha. From a water spring beneath this rock-altar flows a streamlet, which being led through the mouth of a stone dragon, thence falls so as to turn a wheel which acts on cogs; these in their turn jerk a rope, which swings a small beam of wood suspended horizontally from the roof. At every rebound this beam strikes the outside of a large bronze bell, producing a very deep-toned melodious boom, which is heard afar upon the mountain. Thus, by the action of the dragon fountain, the waters have through the long ages continued to pay their ceaseless tribute of praise to Buddha. It is a pretty scene, but in order to realise it you must mentally fill in a thousand details of Chinese fancy—odd bits of stone carving, ornamental stone bridges, bright flowers and rich foliage, sunlight and warm deep shadows, and over all the great mountain towering to the blue heaven.

Returning to the monastery we duly inspected one of Buddha's holy teeth, which is kept in a dull crystal casket in a locked shrine—an elephant's tooth being laid before it as an appropriate votive offering. The Buddhists of China have a good many such relics of their great leader, but having long ago done homage in Ceylon to the lineal descendant of the only genuine article, we of course looked on all these as spurious imitations, and not without good reason. For instance, in Gill's 'River of Golden Sand,' he mentions that while travelling in Northern China he went to see 'The Tooth of Heaven,' which proved to be merely a bit of sandstone shaped like a tooth! A small temple had been built over it, but the roof did not cover the stone itself, for the Chinese informed him that if it were covered the God of Thunder would commit some fearful devastation on the town.

Far more interesting than the spurious relic of a dead past was the afternoon service in the great temple, in presence of the Three Pure Ones, *i.e.* three gigantic gilded images of Buddha, which, although symbolising the perfect Buddha of the Past, the Present, and the Future, are all exactly alike, and are each overshadowed by a gilded canopy. Large gilt statues of the disciples of Buddha are ranged on each side of the temple. Three very handsome altars of black lacquer, with gold and crimson decorations, red candles, and altar vessels of pewter, are dedicated to three different groups of idols, and one large central altar stands in advance of these three. The usual handsome banners and

coloured lamps light up the sombre shadows of the roof. The great service of the day is held at 4 a.m. every morning, when all the inmates of the monastery must be present. Many are absent from the afternoon service, having work to attend to. Nevertheless there was a large muster, so we had a good opportunity of noting the variations in the dress of divers ranks. Of course all are shaven, and the majority wear the orthodox yellow robe, but some indulge in a yellow hood, some have a lilac mantle, and some wear a grey robe. Even the best-dressed priests all have their robes made of many pieces neatly patched together, to keep up the semblance of the tattered raiment of poverty.

The ritual was very elaborate, accompanied by many protestations and genuflexions, and at one point in the service the whole congregation (who had been standing sideways to right and left) veered round to the altar, recited some formula, and made a low bow.

Time and tide bade us hurry away, so we could only look hastily into the side chapels, in one of which are numerous images of the thousand-armed Goddess of Mercy. (I had seen one gigantic image of her at Amoy, where her gilded canopy was formed of a thousand golden hands.) What struck us as very incongruous, in the midst of so much gilding and colour and such beautiful pieces of fine old china, was to see the altar in one of the minor chapels decorated with a vulgar black bottle which acted as a flower vase!

Retracing our way through the forest along the stone pavement and down the long stairs, we reached the paddy fields at sunset, and found the patient men and beasts still ploughing. The house-boat was now able to come alongside, so we were spared the horrors of recrossing the mud, and an hour later we reached the green isle, in time for a pleasant non-vegetarian dinner party.

A much smaller monastery in this neighbourhood, chiefly interesting because of its exceedingly picturesque situation, is that of Yuen-Foo, to which we made another expedition by house-boat, this time dropping down the river Min for about twelve miles to the Pagoda anchorage, and thence proceeding up the Yuen-Foo river by easy stages till, on the third night, we reached 'The Rapids,' where we had to transfer ourselves to a flat-bottomed boat specially constructed for this service. Though the distance is not great, the current is so strong that it required the hard labour of a dozen men for three hours to pull us up the stream to a village, where

we were landed and carried as usual in the luxurious cane arm-chairs, along tortuous paths between flooded fields, to the base of the hills, whence, ascending a beautifully wooded glen, already bright with dwarf scarlet azalea and fragrant with jessamine, we made our way to the monastery, the first glimpse of which is singularly picturesque. Somehow it suggested to me the idea of a hermit crab looking out of its borrowed shell, with all its claws far out. For it consists of a cluster of wooden chalets, which nestle into a cave on the face of a crag, and the monastery, having outgrown its cave (just as a wandering crab outgrows its shell), has to support its outermost buildings on a light scaffolding of tall poles of very irregular length, resting wherever a jutting angle of rock affords a vantage point. From the summit of the crag falls a stream, which (vanishing among the feathery clumps of tall bamboo which wave beneath the crag) rushes impetuously down the beautiful glen. A flight of zigzag steps brought us to the monastery, where we were most courteously received by the yellow-robed brethren, who not only gave us the inevitable tea, but further a draught of the Water of Life (or at least of longevity), which drips from one of the many stalactites which fringe the roof of the cave, forming a sparkling pool before the shrine of Buddha. For culinary purposes the monks have devised a most ingenious water supply, by simply leading a rope from a bamboo trough at the kitchen door to that point of the overhanging crag where the bright streamlet leaps from its upper channel, falling in a glittering veil into the valley below. The view from this monastery is singularly beautiful.

Following the course of the river Min for from eighty to one hundred miles above Foochow we come to a region of most beautiful scenery, where the mountains tower to a height of from six to eight thousand feet, and the river winds amid majestic crags, all broken up into amazingly fantastic forms—gigantic towers, cyclopean columns, and majestic ramparts. This is the celebrated Bohea tea country, and the cultivators are Buddhist monks, whose very numerous monasteries nestle in the most picturesque fashion among the huge rocks, many being perched on summits of perpendicular precipices, which, seen from the river, appear to be wholly inaccessible.

The tea fields where these agricultural brethren toil so diligently are most irregular patches of ground of every size and shape, scattered here, there, and everywhere among these rocky

mountains; but, like all Chinese gardening, the tea cultivation is exquisitely neat, and the multitude of carefully clipped little bushes have a curiously formal appearance, in contrast with the reckless manner in which Nature has tossed about the fragments of her shattered mountains.

From these strange fields the carefully gathered leaves are carried in large basket-work trays of split bamboo to the monasteries, there to be spread on mats and left in the sun till they are partially dry, after which they are placed in very large flat circular trays, and barefooted brethren proceed to use their feet as rollers, and twirl the leaves round and round till each has acquired an individual curl. (This does not sound very nice, does it?) Then the whole process is repeated a second time; the leaves have another turn in the sun, another foot-curling, and a more elaborate hand-rubbing. Then once more they are exposed to the sun, till they are so thoroughly dried that no trace of green remains. They are then packed in bags, each weighing about sixty lbs., and despatched from the monasteries on the shoulders of tea-coolies, each of whom carries two bags slung from the ends of a bamboo which rests on his shoulder. Thus they are consigned to the foreign tea-merchants, to be fired under their own supervision in the great tea-hongs, where the hitherto unadulterated leaf receives that coating of indigo and gypsum which imparts the bloom so highly prized in the European market, to which it is shipped in boxes labelled 'pure uncoloured tea,' greatly to the edification of the heathen Chinese, who is not so much astonished at the fraud as at the singular taste which is said to necessitate its practice. It is needless to remark that the Chinese merchants have themselves taken the hint, and prepare specially coloured tea for foreigners.

Having thus glanced at the link which connects the British consumer of Bohea with the diligent inmates of the rock-monasteries, we may take another long stride northward, for about three hundred miles, into Che-kiang, which is the next of the nineteen Provinces, and of which Ningpo—'The City of the Peaceful Wave'—is the principal town. Here, thanks to the kindness of the late lamented Bishop Russell, I obtained glimpses of many of the principal monasteries both in the city and in various districts of the country. The Bishop was himself so well known in Ningpo, and possessed the confidence and respect of the people of every degree in so remarkable a manner, that it was indeed a privilege

to accompany him on his walks through that great city. He took me one day to visit a group of great temples and monasteries just inside the South Gate. In the first we entered we saw about eighty priests and monks, some with yellow robes, some with grey, but all wearing a yellow mantle (it rather resembles our academic hood). This garment is fastened on the shoulder by a large clasp of imitation jade.

In the absence of the old abbot we were received by a very intelligent young man, with bright, clever eyes, who did the honours of the place most gracefully. The Bishop's long residence in Ningpo, since 1848, had of course made him thoroughly familiar with all the elaborate courtesies and formalities which the Chinese deem so essential. He had also quite mastered all the intricacies of their heart-breaking language, and was even able therein to indulge the ready wit which came so readily to his lips in his mother-tongue. Consequently, whenever he got into conversation with the people he was always certain of a most attentive audience. On the present occasion all the brethren came crowding round to hear his talk with the sub-abbot, evidently keenly interested. We remarked what very young men they all were, and were told that the older men retire to the monasteries in the mountains, to end their days in contemplation, but the younger and more active men are kept in the cities, to go about performing all the religious services required of them. Presently the slow boom of the deep-toned gong summoned the brethren to worship in the great temple in presence of the Three Great Buddhas.

The young principal then took us to his own sitting-room, where some Chinese visitors were dining. He was hospitably anxious that we should do the same, but our capacities were limited to tea. He then showed us the great refectory, and the kitchen, in which rice can be cooked for two thousand persons; also the guest room, specially devoted to travelling priests, of whom there were a considerable number then resting. The Bishop talked to them all, and found that they came from different Provinces all over the Empire. They each carry a certificate which proves them to be true priests or monks, and insures them lodging for a reasonable period in any monastery where they arrive. Doubtless this privilege is a good deal abused by the idlers, one of whom told us one day, with a chuckle of delight, that since he had become a monk he had no longer any occasion

to work, for that any 'tail-less' man could always count on food and raiment.

We were next taken into a sort of sitting-room, round which were ranged a number of priests sitting with their legs tucked up tailor-wise, in the attitude of Buddha, like whom they were doubtless seeking to be absorbed in meditation. I fear our entrance must have deprived them of some merit in that respect. Seeing that my attention was arrested by a large woodcut, printed at the monastic press, showing the Goddess of Mercy with the Young Child in her arms, sitting on clouds with the Dragon under her feet, and surrounded by Chinese celestial beings and white water-lilies, one of the priests kindly presented me with a copy of it, and a very curious and interesting gift I consider it.

We then passed on to a second great monastery, which seemed nearly an exact counterpart of the first.

An expedition of especial interest was to Tien-Dong, 'The Monastery of the Heavenly Child,' which lies about twenty miles from Ningpo. Thither the Bishop most kindly arranged that I should accompany a lady, a member of his mission, whose wonderful knowledge of the Chinese language, both colloquial and classic, is a source of never-ending amazement to the people. So we started in the mission-house boat, which is simply a common boat of the country, very different from the luxurious boats of the mercantile houses, but so arranged as to allow of sleeping and cooking on board. All these boats are provided with arched roofs made in sections on a telescopic principle, so that by day they all slide back, one beneath the other, and at night can be drawn forward, so as to furnish a strong rain-proof cover.

For a short distance our route lay up the great river; then it was necessary to enter one of the canals, which here intersect the country in every direction, flowing at a level considerably higher than the river; and as canal locks were not invented in the days of Confucius, they do not exist in the China of to-day, consequently boats are raised or lowered, as the case may be, by an enormous expenditure of labour, human or bovine. From the river level to that of the canal the bank is sloped and built up with solid masonry, which is overlaid with slippery clay. Strong hawsers made of split and twisted bamboo are passed round the stern or prow of the boat, which is then hauled up or lowered by the united force of many men turning capstans, or else by the sheer dragging power of two teams of buffaloes, and after

an immense amount of exertion and noisy talk, the boat at last glides into its new channel.

Thus we were raised to our higher level, and glided on for some hours, through richly cultivated level country intersected by numerous minor canals, all crossed by high-pitched stone bridges. Here and there we passed great triumphal arches of solid masonry enriched with most elaborate carving, erected in honour of some deed which has commended itself to the Chinese notion of merit. It may be to a benevolent citizen, or to a daughter whom intense filial piety has induced to give of her own flesh to make medicine to save a parent's life; or to a widow or widower who, having been early deprived of his or her mate, has through long years of secular life continued faithful to the memory of the departed; or perhaps the great stone arch commemorates the constancy of a maiden whose betrothed died ere they were wedded, and who refused to accept another bridegroom. The people in this Province seem to delight in doing honour to such rare virtue, and so these curious triple erections are scattered all over the country in the most promiscuous way, and the most unexpected situations.

Ending our voyage by clear moonlight, we anchored at the foot of the hills, and awoke at early dawn to greet as lovely a May-day as heart could desire. True to traditions of home we gathered abundant May dew on fields of pink clover and banks of golden buttercups. Then we got chair-coolies and so started on the ascent to the monastery, by a lovely path winding up and down among green hills, and through a paradise of most heavenly flowers. In many places the path was overshadowed by tallow trees covered with their own lovely blossoms, while other trees were festooned with the richest clusters of large white dog-roses and lilac wisteria. Here and there we came to thickets of most gorgeous golden azalea, scenting the whole air with their delicious perfume. I never saw such glorious azaleas as these, each cluster ranging from eight to fifteen inches in circumference, and on many heads I counted from forty to fifty large blossoms. A few days earlier the hills had seemed blood-red from the abundance of vividly crimson azaleas; now these had well-nigh faded, and been replaced by these golden beauties, but a little further up the hills we found delicate lilac and rose-coloured azaleas, and a lovely and very fragrant plant with masses of waxlike lilac blossom.

Here and there we passed graves—no longer the ornamental

horse-shoe graves of the Fokien Province, but ugly little brick houses, some of them encased in straw.

Sometimes our path led us through clumps of bamboo, sometimes through avenues of fine old fir-trees, beneath which, here and there, are pleasant rest houses—pleasant also to the eye, the walls being coloured of a harmonious red, while the roof is pearly grey. The road from the water-level to the monastery (a distance of five miles) is a fine paved causeway, and near the monastery every twenty-ninth stone is embellished with a carved lotus-blossom. Everything about the place is venerable and harmonious, especially the colouring of the building, the walls of which, like those of the rest-houses, are of a rich but faded red, with weather-beaten grey roofs. It is a very large and handsome old monastery, as fine an example as we could wish to see.

Here we two ladies arrived (escorted only by a table servant) and were most hospitably welcomed by the brethren. An excellent room was assigned to us in the guests' quarters, and we were made to feel as much at our ease as if we had come to crave the performance of costly services on behalf of the dead, which was the object for which three wealthy Chinese families were boarding at the monastery. These told us that they were each paying sixty dollars (12*l.*) a day for priestly services, besides the regular charge for their board and lodging, and as one of these families had already been there a week, it appeared that the priests were making a pretty good thing of it. I am bound to say that they worked pretty hard for their money, for night and day services were going on almost without intermission in one or other of the many shrines.

The main temple here is very fine indeed—certainly it is the most impressive heathen temple with which I am acquainted—an impression due to the singularly calm beauty of the three great gilded images of Buddha; all three exactly alike. They are each about forty feet in height, their lotus-thrones are raised on a platform which gives them an elevation of ten feet more, and each is overshadowed by a great gilt canopy retaining the form (though detail and symbolism are apparently forgotten) of the seven-headed cobra of India and Ceylon. Here the canopy is made to suggest clouds.

As usual, there are a multitude of other images in the temple, shrines to the Queen of Heaven, and to the Gods of Heaven and Earth, and large gilt images of Buddha's favoured disciples.

Having arrived some time before the coolies, who were burdened with our food and bedding, we decided to ask for dinner, knowing that where there were so many Chinese guests our doing so could not be inconvenient. A bright, pleasant-looking young priest at once led us to a comfortable guest room, where an excellent dinner was speedily brought to us in courses—first a tray of cakes, sweets, and pea-nuts; then a great lacquer-box of steaming hot rice, with bowls of three different soups, and nine other dishes, including young bamboo shoots, stewed, which were particularly good, rather like asparagus. Of course the whole was entirely vegetable, though some preparations of corn husk and other things tasted so very much like meat and preserved fish that we found it difficult to persuade ourselves that such was not the case. For beverages we had rice wine and tea, and when, having thoroughly enjoyed our meal, we called for the reckoning, we were told that if six persons had dined the charge would have been 200 cash, *i.e.* 20 cents, or about 10d.! We devoted the day to exploring the immediate neighbourhood and the azalea-covered hills; and we visited the cave-home of a genuine old hermit, whom we had seen at the temple wearing a curious-shaped silver band round his head; he had allowed his hair to grow quite long. He offered us rosaries of handsome black glossy berries for sale. We also visited the curious receptacles for the ashes of cremated priests.

Being anxious to secure a sketch of the interior of the temple, we returned thither, but again service was going on, and about a hundred brethren were present, some robed in grey and some in yellow, but here all wear crimson mantles, made of small bits sewn together to look like rags. I naturally feared that the priests might object to my sketching during service, but I found that on the contrary they were greatly interested, and anxious to make me comfortable. One fine old man, however, asked what was the good, and what merit could there be in my doing all this, if I did not reverence the Poussahs (*i.e.* the images). He admitted, however, that very few even of his own fraternity did so.

What struck me as particularly strange was that a number of the visitors gathered round my companion, asking her to tell them about 'the doctrine,' meaning Christianity. I ventured to suggest that the priests would surely object to all this talk in the temple during a service, but the bystanders scouted the idea, and then the principal women asked my friend Miss Lawrence to go to their

room, to talk to them at leisure. Yet these were the very people who were paying for all these services on behalf of their ancestors, and who had been doing so for years past, at an annual cost of 340 dollars.

That was an evening much to be remembered, as we sat in our quiet room in the grey old monastery on the azalea-covered hills, looking out to the clear moonlight, while ever and anon the stillness was broken by some temple sound of chant or bell. At 8 p.m. the loveliness of the night tempted us forth again, and attracted by the deep tones of the great temple gong we threaded our way through long passages and past the monks' dormitories till we reached the great temple, where an ancestral offering was going on, all manner of food and paper-money, clothes, and other gifts for the dead being placed before tablets on which were inscribed their names. The great central Buddha was partly veiled by a yellow curtain embroidered with blue dragons. Before him, on a raised platform, sat six priests and a superior (not the very old abbot), who wore a sort of mitre like a crown, with eight or nine points. As a scenic effect I have never seen anything more striking than this, as seen by the subdued light of quaintly shaped hanging lamps, mostly of paper, but some of coloured glass with silken fringe—a light which scarcely touched the solemn gloom of the surrounding temple, or the intense shadows of the dark, heavy roof, so that the whole light was concentrated on the central group, and especially on the great golden images, which, solemn and calm, looked down on their worshippers through the filmy clouds of fragrant incense which floated upwards, to lose themselves in the darkness.

While the priests were chaunting a prolonged litany we passed into another chapel, where an exactly similar service was being performed in presence of tablets bearing the same names. Here we found all the relations—pleasant and very superior men and women. They told us a good deal about themselves, and at once requested Miss Lawrence to tell them more about Christian doctrine.

After a while we went to bed, but not to much sleep, for all night long sounds of temple bells and gongs kept awakening us, and at about 2 a.m., roused by the solemn booming of the great gong in the temple (which seemed to startle the stillness of the hills and awaken ghostly echoes), we stole forth again, once more feeling our way along the dark corridors, when happily our special

friend, the pleasant young priest, overtook us as he was hurrying along obedient to the summons, and gave us the benefit of his lantern. This time we found another family about to perform ancestral worship. Presently twenty-four priests came in, wearing the crimson mantle, and intoned a long service. The two men and two women of the family went through many prostrations, and each separately lighted joss-sticks and lamps all over the place, and laid twenty-four little parcels of money on the altar. Presently another priest came in, followed by an acolyte bearing a tray on which were twenty-four little parcels, each containing thirty-six cash, equal in value to about twopence. One of these was presented to each officiating priest. Afterwards, however, the larger parcels were distributed.

In one of the lesser chapels we found many pasteboard horses, houses, servants' boxes of paper, clothes, and quantities of silvered paper ingots, ready to be burnt for the dead. I should have liked to see this noble bonfire, but being very sleepy we returned to bed and rested till 6 a.m., when, wishing to see what was going on, I once more retraced the now familiar way to the great temple, and found separate services going on at each of the principal shrines before the colossal Buddhas, and in presence of the Goddess of Mercy.

After one more day, replete with memories of deep interest, we bade adieu to this kindly fraternity, and started on a further journey, that my companion might counsel and cheer various infant communities of Christians, such as are now scattered all over the country—fine young saplings, which, though now subject to many a bitter storm of persecution, are, beyond all question, destined to develop into majestic trees, which in due time shall so expand as to leave no room for the idolatry which now reigns supreme throughout the Empire.

A week later found us established at the Shihdoze monastery in the Snowy Valley, at a distance of about forty miles from Ning-po in another direction. Again our route lay through lovely country, sheets of pink clover, golden rape, and yellow buttercups on the levels near the river, and on the mountains gorgeous thickets of orange-azalea, with lingering blossoms of the vivid crimson, and trees literally embowered in clustering roses and fragrant jessamine, while the true hawthorn and another variety bore their wealth of snowy blossoms in as great perfection as though blooming in an English lane.

But as a monastery this is very inferior to that of Tien-Dong. Externally the buildings are of the same harmonious red and grey colouring, but the temple is shabby and the images are hideous. The whole place is in rather a ruinous condition, and we found it tenanted by only eight brethren, who received us very kindly, and gave us their best guest chamber, a rickety, tumble-down old room, where however we soon ensconced ourselves, and slept the sleep of the weary.

We were awakened at 2 a.m. by the deep booming tones of the great bell, which is struck on the outside by the swinging of a wooden beam. This was followed by the beating of the great temple drum. It sounded very solemn in the stillness of night, and when the chaunting began interest overcame weariness, and we found our way down the dark rickety stairs and through the long passages, past the great empty kitchen, and the shrine of the kitchen-god, and across the moonlit court, till we reached the temple, where we stood silently in the shadow of a great pillar, where our presence was not perceived. The eight brethren were all present in full dress, wearing the mantle fastened on the left breast. One knelt apart, one beat a wooden skull-shaped drum, and the remaining six walked round and round in sunwise circle, while reiterating a sentence. Then all knelt and prostrated themselves again and again, most devoutly. There was only one light in the temple—a large, dim lamp, which is kept ever burning before the great altar—a light so feeble that all ugliness of detail was lost, and there remained only a somewhat weird but fine general effect of gilded images and broad shadows.

We passed hence into the clear moonlight, and listened to the croaking of legions of frogs in the neighbouring rice-fields, till the monotony suggested a return to our pillows.

These two monasteries may be considered fair types of those which abound in the mountain districts of Che-kiang. In those near Ning-po alone dwell many thousands of monks, while numerous ascetics, such as the old hermit we visited, live in solitary huts or caves, to which their food is daily brought from the nearest monastery.

I will only glance briefly at one more establishment of the sort—namely, the great Lama temple at Peking, in which there are about 1,300 monks under the headship of a Lama who assumes the title of ‘The Living Buddha.’ These monks inhabit streets of small houses in courts all round their temple. They have an evil

name for gross immorality, and, moreover, are generally most offensively insolent to all foreigners, many of whom have vainly endeavoured to obtain access to the monastery, even the silver key, which is usually so powerful in China, failing to unlock the inhospitable gates. That I had the privilege of entrance was solely due to the influence of Dr. Dudgeon, of the London Mission Society, whose medical skill had happily proved so beneficial to 'The Living Buddha,' and several of the priests, as to insure him a welcome from these. It was not, however, an easy matter to get at these men, as a particularly insolent monk was acting as doorkeeper, and attempted forcibly to prevent our entrance. The wretch was, however, at length overawed, and finally reduced to abject humility by threats to report his rudeness to the head Lama.

At last, after wearisome expostulation, every door was thrown open to us, but the priest in charge of each carefully locked it after us, lest we should avoid giving him an individual tip. Happily I had a large supply of five and ten cent silver pieces, which my companion's knowledge of Chinese custom compelled our extortioners to accept. At the same time we could neither of us avoid an unpleasant dread of a possible trap, as each successive door was securely locked. Every corner of the great buildings is full of interest; it is rich in scroll paintings and images. In the main temple there is a gigantic bronze image of Buddha, so great that we mounted a long stair to reach a gallery running round the temple about the level of his shoulders.

I found that this gallery led into two circular buildings, one on each side, constructed for the support of two immense rotatory cylinders full of niches, each containing the image of a Buddhist saint. To turn these cylinders is apparently an act of homage to the whole saintly family. Some Lama monasteries deal thus with their sacred books, and place them in a huge cylindrical book-case, which they turn bodily to save the trouble of turning individual pages, the understanding having apparently small play in either case. Dr. Edkins mentions having seen such a library, together with three hundred revolving praying-wheels, in a monastery at Wootai, where there are perhaps two thousand Mongol Lamas. He has seen a similar wheel in a monastery at Hang-chow, and one in Peking. I myself have seen many such in Japan. In one of these monasteries at Wootai, Dr. Edkins observed a most ingenious arrangement, whereby the steam which ascends from a

kettle, ever boiling for the monastic tea, does further duty by turning a praying-wheel which is suspended from the ceiling.

Although we reached the Lama temple at 6 a.m. we were too late to see the grand morning service, which commences at 4 a.m., when all the brethren wear yellow robes, purple mantles, and a sort of helmet of yellow felt with a very high crest.

I would fain have spent hours in looking through the many interesting details of this place, and the priests at last were so civil that they volunteered to show us everything. But so much time had been wasted at first, and we were so thoroughly tired out by the annoyances to which they had subjected us, that we were compelled to decline further inspection.

Thus ended my last glimpse of Chinese monasteries.

THE TWO CARNEGIES.

I.



HAROLD,' said Ernest Carnegie to his twin brother at breakfast one morning, 'have you got a tooth aching slightly to-day?'

'Yes, by Jove, I have!' Harold answered, laying down the 'Times' and looking across the table with interest to his brother; 'which one was yours?'

'The third from the canine on the upper left side,' Ernest replied quickly. 'And yours?'

'Let me see. This is the canine, isn't it?'

One, two, three; yes.'

'The same, of course. It's really a very singular coincidence. How about the time? Was that as usual?'

'I'll tell you in a minute. Mine came on the day of the Guthries' hop. I was down at Brighton that morning. What date? Let me think; why, the 9th, I'm certain. To-day's what, mother?'

'The 23rd,' said Harold, glancing for confirmation at the paper. 'The law works itself out once more as regularly as if by machinery. I'm just a fortnight later than you, Ernest, as always.'

Ernest drummed upon the table with his finger for a minute. 'I'm afraid you'll have it rather badly to-day, Harold,' he said after a pause. 'Mine got unbearable towards midday, and if I hadn't had it looked to in the afternoon, I couldn't have danced a

single dance to save my life that evening. I advise you to go round to the dentist's immediately, and try to get it stopped before it goes any further.'

Harold finished his cup of coffee, and looked out of the window blankly at the fog outside. 'It's an awful thought,' he said at last, 'this living, as we two do, by clockwork! Everybody else lives exactly the same way, but they don't have their attention called to it, as we do. Just to think that from the day you and I were born, Ernest, it was written in the very fabric of our constitutions that when we were twenty-three years and five months old, the third molar in our upper left jaws should begin to fail us! It's really appalling in its unanswerable physical fatalism, when one comes to think upon it.'

'So I said to myself at the Guthries', the morning it began to give me a twinge,' said Ernest, in the self-same tone. 'It seemed to me such a terrible idea that in a fortnight's time, as certain as the sun, the very same tooth in your head would begin to go, as the one that was going in mine. It's too appalling, really.'

'But do you actually mean to say,' asked pretty little Nellie Holt, the visitor, newly come the day before from Cheshire, 'that whenever one of you gets a toothache, the other one gets a toothache in the same tooth a fortnight later?'

'Not a toothache only,' Ernest answered—he was studying for his degree as a physician, and took this department upon himself as by right—'but every other disease or ailment whatsoever. We're like two clocks wound up to strike at fixed moments; only, we're not wound up to strike exactly together. I'm fourteen days in advance of Harold, so to speak, and whatever happens to me to-day will happen to him, in all probability, in exactly a fortnight later.'

'How very extraordinary!' said Nellie, looking quickly from one handsome clear-cut face to its exact counterpart in the other. 'And yet not so extraordinary, after all, when one comes to think how very much alike you both are.'

'Ah, that's not all,' said Ernest, slowly; 'it's something that goes a good deal deeper than that, Miss Holt. Consider that every one of us is born with a certain fixed and recognisable constitution, which we inherit from our fathers and mothers. In us, from our birth upward, are the seeds of certain diseases, the possibilities of certain actions and achievements. One man is born with hereditary consumption; another man with hereditary scrofula; a third

with hereditary genius or hereditary drunkenness, each equally innate in the very threads and strands of his system. And it's all bound to come out, sooner or later, in its own due and appointed time. Here's a fellow whose father had gout at forty: he's born with such a constitution that, as the hands on his life-dial reach forty, out comes the gout in his feet, wherever he may be, as certain as fate. It's horrible to think of, but it's the truth, and there's no good in disguising it.'

Nellie Holt shuddered slightly. 'What a dreadful materialistic creed, Mr. Carnegie,' she said, looking at him with a half-frightened air. 'It's almost as bad as Mohämmedan fatalism.'

'No, not so bad as that,' Ernest Carnegie answered; 'not nearly so bad as that. The Oriental belief holds that powers above you compel your life against your will: we modern scientific thinkers only hold that your own inborn constitution determines your whole life for you, will included. But whether we like it or dislike it, Miss Holt, there are the facts, and nobody can deny them. If you'd lived with a twin sister, as Harold and I have lived together for twenty-three years, you'd see that the clocks go as they are set, with fixed and predestined regularity. Twins, you know, are almost exactly alike in all things, and in the absolute coincidence of their constitutions you can see the inexorable march of disease, and the inexorable unfolding of the predetermined life-history far better than in any other conceivable case. I'm a scientific man myself, you see, and I have such an opportunity of watching it all as no other man ever yet had before me.'

'My dear,' said Mrs. Carnegie, the mother, from the head of the table, 'you've no idea how curiously their two lives have always resembled one another. When they were babies, they were so much alike that we had to tie red and blue ribbons round their necks to distinguish them. Ernest was red and Harold blue—no, Ernest was blue and Harold red: at least, I'm not quite certain which way it was, but I know we have a note of it in the family Bible, for Mr. Carnegie made it at the time for fear we should get confused between them when we were bathing them. So we put the ribbons on the moment they were christened, and never took them both off together for a second, even to bathe them, so as to prevent accidents. Well, do you know, dear, from the time they were babies, they were always alike in everything; but Ernest was always a fortnight before Harold. He said "Mamma" one day, and just a fortnight later Harold said

the very same word. Then Ernest said "sugar," and so did Harold in another fortnight. Ernest began to toddle a fortnight the earliest. They took the whooping cough and the measles in the same order; and they cut all their teeth so, too, the same teeth first on each side, and just at a fortnight's distance from one another. It's really quite an extraordinary coincidence.'

'The real difficulty would be,' said Harold, 'to find anything in which we didn't exactly resemble one another. Well, now I must be off to this horrid office with the Pater. Are you ready, Pater? I'll call in at Estwood's in the course of the morning, Ernest, and tell him to look after my teeth. I don't want to miss the Balfour's party this evening. Curious that we should be going to a party this evening too. *That* isn't fated in our constitutions, anyhow, is it, Ernest? Good morning, Miss Holt; the first waltz, remember. Come along, Pater.' And he went out, followed immediately by his father.

'I must be going too,' said Ernest, looking at his watch; 'I have an appointment with Dowson at Guy's at half-past ten—a very interesting case: hereditary cataract; three brothers, all of them get it, each as he reaches twelve years old, and Dowson has performed the operation on two, and is going to perform it on the other this very day. Good morning, Miss Holt; the second waltz for me; you won't forget, will you?'

'How awfully alike they really are, Mrs. Carnegie,' said Nellie, as they were left alone. 'I'm sure I shall never be able to tell them apart. I don't even know their names yet. The one that has just gone out, the one that's going to be a doctor—that's Mr. Harold, isn't it?'

'Oh no, dear,' Mrs. Carnegie answered, putting her arm round Nellie's waist affectionately, 'that's Ernest. Harold's the lawyer. You'll soon learn the difference between them. You can tell Ernest easily, because he usually wears a horrid thing for a scarf-pin, an ivory skull and cross-bones: he wears it, he says, just to distinguish him professionally from Harold. Indeed, that was partly why Mr. Carnegie was so anxious that Harold should go into his own office; so as to make a distinction of profession between them. If Harold had followed his own bent, he would have been a doctor too; they're both full of what they call physiological ideas—dreadful things, I think them. But Mr. Carnegie thought as they were so very much alike already we ought to do something to give them some individuality, as he says: for if they

were both to be doctors or both solicitors, you know, there'd really be no knowing them apart, even for ourselves; and I assure you, my dear, as it is now even they're exactly like one person.'

'Are they as alike in character, then, as they are in face?' asked Nellie.

'Alike in character! My dear, they're absolutely identical. Whatever the one thinks, or says, or does, the other thinks, says, and does at the same time, independently. Why, once Ernest went over to Paris for a week's holiday, while Harold went on some law business of his father's to Brussels. Would you believe it, when they came back they'd each got a present for the other. Ernest had seen a particular Indian silver cigar-case in a shop on the Boulevards, and he brought it home as a surprise for Harold. Well, Harold had bought an exactly similar one in the Montagne de la Cour, and brought it home as a surprise for Ernest. And what was odder still, each of them had had the other's initials engraved upon the back in some sort of heathenish Oriental characters.'

'How very queer,' said Nellie. 'And yet they seem very fond of one another. As a rule, one's always told that people who are exactly alike in character somehow don't get on together.'

'My dear child, they're absolutely inseparable. Their devotion to one another's quite unlimited. You see they've been brought up together, played together, sympathised with one another in all their troubles and ailments, and are sure of a response from each other about everything. It was the greatest trouble of their lives when Mr. Carnegie decided that Harold must become a solicitor for the sake of the practice. They couldn't bear at first to be separated all day; and when they got home in the evening, Ernest from the hospital and Harold from the office, they met almost like a pair of lovers. They've talked together about their work so much that Harold knows almost as much medicine now as Ernest, while Ernest's quite at home, his father declares, in "Benjamin on Sales," and "Chitty on Contract." It's quite delightful to see how fond they are of one another.'

At five o'clock Ernest Carnegie returned from his hospital. He brought two little bunches of flowers with him—some lilies of the valley and a carnation—and he handed them with a smile, one to his sister and one to pretty little Nellie. 'I thought you'd like them for this evening, Miss Holt,' he said. 'I chose a carnation on purpose, because I fancied it would suit your hair.'

'Oh, Ernest,' said his sister, 'you ought to have got a red camellia. That's the proper thing for a brunette like Nellie.'

'Nonsense, Edie,' Ernest answered, 'I hate camellias. Ugliest flowers out: so stiff and artificial. One might as well wear a starched gauze thing from the milliner's.'



'I'm so glad you brought Nellie Holt a flower. She's a sweet girl, Ernest, isn't she?' said Mrs. Carnegie a minute or two later, as Edie and Nellie ran upstairs. 'I wish either of you two boys could take a fancy to a nice girl like her, now.'

'My dear mother,' Ernest answered, turning up his eyes

appealingly. 'A little empty-headed, pink-and-white thing like that! I don't know what Harold thinks, but she'd never do for me, at any rate. Very pretty to look at, very timid to talk to, very nice and shrinking, and all that kind of thing, I grant you; but nothing in her. Whenever I marry, I shall marry a real live woman, not a dainty piece of delicate empty drapery.'

At six o'clock Mr. Carnegie and Harold came in from the office. Harold carried in his hand two little button-hole bouquets, of a few white lilies and a carnation. 'Miss Holt,' he said, as he entered the drawing-room, 'I've brought you and Edie a flower to wear to the Balfours' this evening. This is for you, Edie, with the pale pink; the dark will suit Miss Holt's hair best.'

Edie looked at Ernest and smiled significantly. 'Why didn't you get us camellias, Harold?' she asked, with a faint touch of mischief in her tone.

'Camellias! My dear girl, what a question! I gave Miss Holt credit for better taste than liking camellias. Beastly things, as stiff and conventional as dahlias or sunflowers. You might just as well have a wax rose from an artificial flower-maker while you were about it.'

Edie laughed and looked at Nellie. 'See here,' she said, taking up Ernest's bunches from the little specimen vases where she had put them to keep them fresh in water, 'somebody else has thought of the flowers already.'

Harold laughed, too, a little uneasily. 'Aha,' he said, 'I see Ernest has been beforehand with me as usual. I'm always a day too late. It seems to me I'm the Esau of this duet, and Ernest's the Jacob. Well, Miss Holt, you must take the will for the deed; and after all, one will do for your dress and the other for your hair, won't they?'

'Harold,' said his father, as they went upstairs together to dress for dinner, 'Nellie Holt's a very nice girl, and I've reason to believe—you know I don't judge these matters without documentary evidence—I have reason to believe that she'll come into the greater part of old Stanley Holt's money. She's his favourite niece, and she benefits largely, as I happen to know, under his will. *Verbum sap.*, my dear boy; she's a pretty girl, and has sweet manners. In my opinion, she'd make——'

'My dear Pater,' Harold exclaimed, interrupting him, 'for Heaven's sake don't say so. Pretty enough, I grant you; and no doubt old Stanley Holt's money would be a very nice thing in its

way; but just seriously consider now, if you were a young man yourself, what on earth could you see in Nellie Holt to attract your love or admiration? Why, she shrinks and blushes every time she speaks to you. No, no, whenever I marry I should like to marry a girl of some presence and some character.'

'Well, well,' said his father, pausing a second at his bedroom door, 'perhaps if she don't suit you, Harold, she'll suit Ernest.'

'I should have thought, Pater, you knew us two better than that by this time.'

'But, my dear Harold, you can't both marry the same woman!'

'No, we can't, Pater, but it's my opinion we shall both fall unanimously in love with her, at any rate, whenever we happen to see her.'

II.

THE Balfours were very rich people—city people; 'something in the stockbroking or bankruptcy line, I believe,' Ernest Carnegie told Nellie Holt succinctly as they drove round in the brougham with his sister; and their dance was of the finest modern moneyed fashion. 'Positively reeks with Peruvian bonds and Deferred Egyptians, doesn't it?' said Harold as they went up the big open staircase and through the choice exotic flowers on the landing. 'Old Balfour has so much money, they say, that if he tries his hardest he can't spend his day's income in the twenty-four hours. He had a good hard try at it once. Prince of Wales or somebody came to a concert for some sort of public purpose—hospital, or something—and old B. got the whole thing up on the tallest possible scale of expenditure. Spent a week in preparation. Had in dozens of powdered footmen; ordered palms and orange-trees in boxes from Nice; hung electric lights all over the drawing-room; offered Pattalini and Goldoni three times as much for their services as the total receipts for the charity were worth; and at the end of it all he called in a crack accountant to reckon up the cost of the entertainment. Well, he found with all his efforts, he'd positively lived fifty pounds within his week's income. Extraordinary, isn't it?'

'Very extraordinary indeed,' said Nellie, 'if it's quite true, you know.'

'You owe me the first waltz,' Harold said, without noticing the reservation. 'Don't forget it, please, Miss Holt.'

'I say, Balfour,' Ernest Carnegie observed to the son of the house, shortly after they had entered the ballroom, 'who's that beautiful tall dark girl over there? No, not the pink one, that other girl behind her in the deep red satin.'

'She? oh, she's nothing in particular,' Harry Balfour answered carelessly (the girl in pink was worth eighty thousand, and her figure cast into the shade all her neighbours in Harry Balfour's arithmetical eyes). 'Her name's Walters, Isabel Walters, daughter of a lawyer fellow—no offence meant to your profession, Carnegie. Let me see: you *are* the lawyer, aren't you? No knowing you two fellows apart, you know, especially when you've got white ties on.'

'No, I'm not the lawyer fellow,' Ernest answered quietly; 'I'm the doctor fellow. But it doesn't at all matter; we're used to it. Would you mind introducing me to Miss Walters?'

'Certainly not. Come along. I believe she's a very nice girl in her way, you know, and dances capitally; but not exactly in our set, you see; not exactly in our set.'

'I should have guessed as much to look at her,' Ernest answered, with a faint undertone of sarcasm in his voice that was quite thrown away upon Harry Balfour. And he walked across the room after his host to ask Isabel Walters for the first waltz.

'Tall,' he thought to himself as he looked at her: 'dark, fine face, beautiful figure, large eyes; makes her own dresses; strange sort of person to meet at the Balfours' dances.'

Isabel Walters danced admirably. Isabel Walters talked cleverly. Isabel Walters had a character and an individuality of her own. In five minutes she had told Ernest Carnegie that she was the Poor Relation, and in that quality she was asked once yearly to one of the Balfours' Less Distinguished dances. 'This is a Less Distinguished,' she said quickly; 'but I suppose you go to the More Distinguished too?'

'On the contrary,' Ernest answered, laughing; 'though I didn't know the nature of the difference before, I've no doubt that I have to thank the fact of my being Less Distinguished myself for the pleasure of meeting you here this evening.'

Isabel smiled quietly. 'It's a family distinction only,' she said. 'Of course the Balfours wouldn't like the people they ask to know it. But we always notice the difference ourselves. My mother, you know, was the first Mrs. Balfour's half-sister. But in those days, I need hardly tell you, Mr. Balfour hadn't begun to

do great things in Grand Trunk Preferences. Do you know anything about Grand Trunk Preferences?’

‘Absolutely nothing,’ Ernest replied. ‘But to come down to a more practical question: Are you engaged for the next Lancers?’

‘A square dance. Oh, why a square dance? I hate square dances.’

‘I like them,’ said Ernest. ‘You can talk better.’

‘And yet you waltz capitally. As a rule, I notice the men



who like square dances are the sticks who can't waltz without upsetting one. No, I'm not engaged for the next Lancers. Yes, with pleasure.'

Ernest went off to claim little Nellie Holt from his brother.

‘By Jove, Ernest,’ Harold said, as he met him again a little later in the evening, ‘that's a lovely girl you were dancing with just now. Who is she?’

‘A Miss Walters,’ Ernest answered drily.

‘I'll go and get introduced to her,’ Harold went on, looking at

his brother with a searching glance. 'She's the finest girl in the room, and I should like to dance with her.'

'You think so,' said Ernest. And he turned away a little coldly to join a group of loungers by the doorway.

'This is not *our* Lancers yet, Mr. Carnegie,' Isabel said, as Harold stalked up to her with her cousin by his side. 'Ours is No. 7.'

'I'm not the same Mr. Carnegie,' Harold said, smiling, 'though I see I need no introduction now. I'm number seven's brother, and I've come to ask whether I may have the pleasure of dancing number six with you.'

Isabel looked up at him in doubt. 'You are joking, surely,' she said. 'You danced with me just now, the first waltz.'

'You see my brother over by the door,' Harold answered. 'But we're quite accustomed to be taken for one another. Pray don't apologise; we're used to it.'

Before the end of the evening Isabel Walters had danced three times with Ernest Carnegie, and twice with Harold. Before the end of the evening, too, Ernest and Harold were both at once deeply in love with her. She was not perhaps what most men would call a lovable girl; but she was handsome, clever, dashing, and decidedly original. Now, to both the Carnegies alike, there was no quality in a woman so admirable as individuality. Perhaps it was their own absolute identity of tastes and emotions that made them prize the possession of a distinct personality by others so highly; but in any case, there was no denying the fact that they were both head over ears in love with Isabel Walters.

'She's a splendid girl, Edie,' said Harold, as he went down with his sister to the cab in which he was to take her home; 'a splendid girl; just the sort of girl I should like to marry.'

'Not so nice by half as Nellie Holt,' said Edie simply. 'But there, brothers never do marry the girls their sisters want them to.'

'Very unreasonable of the brothers, no doubt,' Harold replied, with a slight curl of his lip: 'but possibly explicable upon the ground that a man prefers choosing a wife who'll suit himself to choosing one who'll suit his sisters.'

'Mother,' said Ernest, as he took her down to the brougham, with little Nellie Holt on his other arm, 'that's a splendid girl, that Isabel Walters. I haven't met such a nice girl as that for a long time.'

'I know a great many nicer,' his mother answered, glancing

half unconsciously towards Nellie, 'but boys never do marry as their parents would wish them.'

'They do not, mother dear,' said Ernest quietly. 'It's a strange fact, but I dare say it's partly dependent upon the general principle that a man is more anxious to live happily with his own wife than to provide a model daughter-in-law for his father and mother.'

'Isabel,' Mrs. Walters said to her daughter, as they took their seats in the cab that was waiting for them at the door, 'what on earth did you mean by dancing five times in one evening with that young man with the light moustache? And who on earth is he, tell me?'

'He's two people, mamma,' Isabel answered seriously; 'and I danced three times with one of him, and twice with the other, I believe; at least so he told me. His name's Carnegie, and half of him's called Ernest and the other half Harold, though which I danced with which time I am sure I can't tell you. He's a pair of twins, in fact, one a doctor and one a lawyer; and he talks just the same sort of talk in either case, and is an extremely nice young man altogether. I really like him immensely.'

'Carnegie!' said Mrs. Walters, turning the name over carefully. 'Two young Carnegies! How very remarkable! I remember somebody was speaking to me about them, and saying they were absolutely indistinguishable. Not sons of Mr. Carnegie, your uncle's solicitor, are they?'

'Yes; so Harry Balfour told me.'

'Then, Isabel, they're very well off, I understand. I hope people won't think you danced five times in the evening with only one of them. They ought to wear some distinctive coat or something to prevent misapprehensions. Which do you like best, the lawyer or the doctor?'

'I like them both exactly the same, mamma. There isn't any difference at all between them, to like one of them better than the other for. They both seem very pleasant and very clever. And as I haven't yet discovered which is which, and didn't know from one time to another which I was dancing with, I can't possibly tell you which I prefer of two identicals. And as to coats, mamma, you know you couldn't expect one of them to wear a grey tweed suit in a ballroom, just to show he isn't the other one.'

In the passage at the Carnegies' Ernest and Harold stopped

Carnegie

one moment, candle in hand, to compare notes with one another before turning into their bedrooms. There was an odd constraint about their manner to each other that they had never felt before during their twenty-three years of life together.

‘Well?’ said Ernest, inquiringly, looking in a hesitating way at his brother.

‘Well?’ Harold echoed, in the same tone.

‘What did you think of it all, Harold?’

‘I think, Ernest, I shall propose to Miss Walters.’

There was a moment’s silence, and a black look gathered slowly on Ernest Carnegie’s brow. Then he said very deliberately, ‘You are in a great hurry coming to conclusions, Harold. You’ve seen very little of her yet; and remember, it was I who first discovered her!’

Harold glanced at him angrily and half contemptuously. ‘You discovered her first!’ he said. ‘Yes, and you are always beforehand with me; but you shall not be beforehand with me this time. I shall propose to her at once, to prevent your anticipating me. So now you know my intentions plainly, and you can govern yourself accordingly.’

Ernest looked back at him with a long look from head to foot.

‘It is war then,’ he said, ‘Harold; war, you will have it? We are rivals.’

‘Yes, rivals,’ Harold answered; ‘and war to the knife if so you wish it.’

‘War?’

‘War!’

‘Good-night, Harold.’

‘Good-night, Ernest.’

And they turned in to their bedrooms, in anger with one another, for the first time since they had quarrelled in boyish fashion over tops and marbles years ago together.

III.



THAT night the two Carnegies slept very little. They were both in love, very seriously in love; and anybody who has ever been in the same condition must have noticed that the symptoms, which may have been very moderate or undecided during the course of the evening, become rapidly more pronounced and violent as you lie awake in the solitude of your chamber through the night

watches. But more than that, they had both begun to feel simultaneously the stab of jealousy. Each of them had been very much taken indeed by Isabel Walters; still, if they had seen no chance of a rival looming in the distance, they might have been content to wait a little, to see a little more of her, to make quite sure of their own affection before plunging headlong into a declaration. After all, it's very absurd to ask a girl to be your companion for life on the strength of an acquaintanceship which has extended over the time occupied by three dances in a single evening. But then, thought each, there was the chance of Ernest's proposing to her, or of Harold's proposing to her, before I do. That idea made precipitancy positively imperative; and by the next morning each of the young men had fully made up his mind to take the first opportunity of asking Isabel Walters to be his wife.

Breakfast passed off very silently, neither of the twins speaking much to one another; but nobody noticed their reticence much; for the morning after the occasional orgy of a dance is apt to prove a very limp affair indeed in professional homes, where dances are not of nightly occurrence. After breakfast, Harold went off quickly to the office, and Ernest, having bespoken a

holiday at the hospital, joined his sister and Nellie Holt in the library.

‘Do you know, Ernest,’ Edie said to him, mindful of her last night’s conversation with her other brother, ‘I really believe Harold has fallen desperately in love at first sight with that tall Miss Walters.’

‘I can easily believe it,’ Ernest answered testily; ‘she’s very handsome and very clever.’

Edie raised her eyebrows a little. ‘But it’s awfully foolish, Ernest, to fall in love blindfold in that way, isn’t it now?’ she said, with a searching look at her brother. ‘He can’t possibly know what sort of a girl she really is from half an hour’s conversation in a ballroom.’

‘For my part, I don’t at all agree with you, Edie,’ said Ernest, in his coldest manner. ‘I don’t believe there’s any right way of falling in love except love at first sight. If a girl is going to please you, she ought to please you instantaneously and instinctively; at least, so I think. It isn’t a thing to be thought about and reasoned about, but a thing to be felt and apprehended intuitively. I couldn’t reason myself into marrying a girl, and what’s more, I don’t want to.’

He sat down to the table, took out a sheet or two of initialed notepaper, and began writing a couple of letters. One of them, which he marked ‘Private’ in the corner, ran as follows:—

‘MY DEAR MISS WALTERS,—Perhaps you will think it very odd of me to venture upon writing to you on the strength of such a very brief and casual acquaintance as that begun last night; but I have a particular reason for doing so, which I think I can justify to you when I see you. You mentioned to me that you were asked to the Montagus’ steam-launch expedition up the river from Surbiton to-morrow; but I understood you to say you did not intend to accept the invitation. I write now to beg of you to be there, as I am going, and I am particularly anxious to meet you and have a little conversation with you on a subject of importance. I know you are not a very conventional person, and therefore I think you will excuse me for asking this favour of you. Please don’t take the trouble to write in reply; but answer by going to the Montagus’, and I shall then be able to explain this very queer letter. In haste,

‘Yours very truly,

‘ERNEST CARNEGIE.’

He read this note two or three times over to himself, looking not very well satisfied with its contents; and then at last, with the air of a man who determines to plunge and stake all upon a single venture, he folded it up and put it in its envelope. 'It'll mystify her a little, no doubt,' he thought to himself; 'and being a woman, she'll be naturally anxious to unravel the mystery. But of course she'll know I mean to make her an offer, and perhaps she'll think me a perfect idiot for not doing it outright, instead of beating about the bush in this incomprehensible fashion. However, it's too cold-blooded, proposing to a girl on paper; I very much prefer the *vivâ voce* system. It's only till to-morrow; and I doubt if Harold will manage to be beforehand with me in that time. He'll be deep in business all morning, and have no leisure to think about her. Anyhow, all's fair in love and war; he said it should be war; and I'll try to steal a march upon him, for all his lawyer's quibbles and quiddits.'

He took another sheet from his blotting book, and wrote a second note, much more rapidly than the first one. It ran after this fashion:—

'DEAR MRS. MONTAGU,—Will you think it very rude of me if I ask you to let me be one of your party on your expedition up the river to-morrow? I heard of it from your son Algernon last night at the Balfours', and I happen to be *very* anxious to meet one of the ladies you have invited. Now, I know you're kindness itself to all your young friends in all these little matters, and I'm sure you won't be angry with me for so coolly inviting myself. If I hadn't felt perfect confidence in your invariable goodness, I wouldn't have ventured to do so. Please don't answer unless you've no room for me, but expect me to turn up at half-past two.

'Yours very sincerely,

'ERNEST CARNEGIE.

'P.S.—We might call at Lady Portlebury's lawn, and look over the conservatories.'

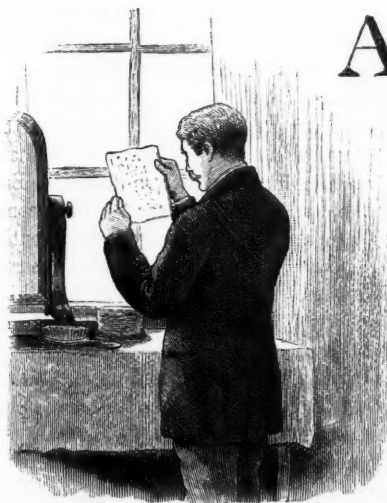
'Now, that's bold but judicious,' Ernest said to himself, admiringly, as he held the letter at arm's length, after blotting it. 'She might have been angry at my inviting myself, though I don't think she would be; but I'm sure she'll be only too delighted if I offer to take her guests over Aunt Portlebury's conservatories. The postscript's a stroke of genius. What a fuss

these people will make, even over the widow of a stupid old cavalry officer, because her husband happens to have been knighted. It's all the better that she's a widow, indeed. The delicious vagueness of the little "Lady" is certainly one of its chief recommendations. Sir Antony being out of the way, Mrs. Montagu's guests can't really tell but that poor dear old Aunt Portlebury may be a real live Countess.' And he folded his second letter up with the full satisfaction of an approving conscience.

When Isabel Walters received Ernest Carnegie's mysterious note, she was certainly mystified by it as he had expected, and also not a little gratified. He meant to propose to her, that was certain; and there was never a woman in the whole world who was not flattered by a handsome young man's marked attentions. It was a very queer letter, no doubt; but it had been written skilfully enough to suit the particular personality of Isabel Walters: for Ernest Carnegie was a keen judge of character, and he flattered himself that he knew how to adapt his correspondence to the particular temperament of the persons he happened to be addressing. And though Isabel had no very distinct idea of what the two Carnegies were severally like (it could hardly have been much more distinct if she had known them both intimately), she felt they were two very good-looking, agreeable young men, and she was not particularly averse to the attentions of either. After all, upon what straws we all usually hang our love-making! We see one another once or twice under exceptionally deceptive circumstances; we are struck at first sight with something that attracts us on either side; we find the attraction is mutual; we flounder at once into a declaration of undying attachment; we get married, and on the whole we generally find we were right after all, in spite of our precipitancy, and we live happily ever afterwards. So it was not really very surprising that Isabel Walters, getting such a note from one of the two handsome young Mr. Carnegies, should have been in some doubt which of the two identicals it actually was, and yet should have felt indefinitely pleased and flattered at the implied attention. Which was Ernest and which Harold could only mean to her, when she came to think on it, which was the one she danced with first last night, and which the one she danced with second. She decided in her own mind that it would be better for her to go to the Montagus' picnic to-morrow, but to say nothing about it to her mother. 'Mamma wouldn't understand the letter,'

she said to herself complacently; 'she's so conventional; and when I come back to-morrow I can tell her one of the young Carnegies was there, and that he proposed to me. She need never know there was any appointment.'

IV.



AT six o'clock Harold Carnegie returned from the office. He, too, had been thinking all day of Isabel Walters, and the moment he got home he went into the library to write a short note to her, before Ernest had, as usual, forestalled him. As he did so he happened to see a few words dimly transferred to the paper in the blotting-book. They were in Ernest's handwriting, and he was quite sure the four first words read, 'My

dear Miss Walters.' Then Ernest had already been beforehand with him, after all! But not by a fortnight: that was one good point; not this time by a fortnight! He would be even with him yet; he would catch up this anticipatory twin brother of his, by force or fraud, rather than let him steal away Isabel Walters from him once and for ever. 'All's fair in love and war,' he muttered to himself, taking up the blotting-book carefully, and tearing out the tell-tale leaf in a furtive fashion. 'Thank Heaven, Ernest writes a thick black hand, the same as I do; and I shall probably be able to read it by holding it up to the light.' In his own soul Harold Carnegie loathed himself for such an act of petty meanness; but he did it, with love and jealousy goading him on, and the fear of his own twin brother stinging him madly, he did it, remorsefully and shamefacedly, but still did it.

He took the page up to his own bedroom, and held it up to

the window-pane. Blurred and indistinct, the words nevertheless came out legibly in patches here and there, so that with a little patient deciphering Harold could spell out the sense of both letters, though they crossed one another obliquely at a slight angle. 'Very brief and casual acquaintance . . . Montagus' steam-launch expedition up the river from Surbiton to-morrow. . . . am going and am particularly anxious to meet you . . . this favour of you . . .' 'So that's his plan, is it?' Harold said to himself. 'Softly, softly, Mr. Ernest, I think I can checkmate you! What's this in the one to Mrs. Montagu? 'Expect me to turn up at half-past two.' Aha, I thought so! Checkmate, Mr. Ernest, checkmate: a scholar's mate for you! He'll be at the hospital till half-past one; then he'll take the train to Clapham Junction, expecting to catch the South-Western at 2.10. But to-morrow's the first of the month; the new time-tables come into force; I've got one and looked it out already. The South-Western now leaves at 2.4, three minutes before Mr. Ernest's train arrives at Clapham Junction. I have him now, I have him now, depend upon it. I'll go down instead of him. I'll get the party under weigh at once. I'll monopolise Isabel, pretty Isabel. I'll find my opportunity at Aunt Portlebury's, and Ernest won't get down to Surbiton till the 2.50 train. Then he'll find his bird flown already: aha, that'll make him angry. Checkmate, my young friend, checkmate. You said it should be war, and war you shall have it. I thank thee, friend, for teaching me that word. Rivals now, you said; yes, rivals. "Dolus an virtus, quis in hoste requirat?" Why, that comes out of the passage about Androgeos! An omen, a good omen. There's nothing like war for quickening the intelligence. I haven't looked at a Virgil since I was in the sixth form; and yet the line comes back to me now, after five years, as pat as the Catechism.'

Chuckling to himself at the fraud to stifle conscience (for he had a conscience), Harold Carnegie dressed hastily for dinner, and went down quickly in a state of feverish excitement. Dinner passed off grimly enough. He knew Ernest had written to Isabel; and Ernest guessed from the other's excited, triumphant manner (though he tried hard to dissemble the note of triumph in it) that Harold must have written too—perhaps forestalling him by a direct proposal. In a dim way Mrs. Carnegie guessed vaguely that some coldness had arisen between her two boys, the first time for many years; and so she held her peace for the most part, or talked in

asides to Nellie Holt and her daughter. The conversation was therefore chiefly delegated to Mr. Carnegie himself, who discoursed with much animation about the iniquitous nature of the new act for reducing costs in actions for the recovery of small debts—a subject calculated to arouse the keenest interest in the minds of Nellie and Edie.

Next morning Harold Carnegie started for the office with prospective victory elate in his very step, and yet with the consciousness of his own mean action grinding him down to the pavement as he walked along it. What a dirty, petty, dishonourable subterfuge! and still he would go through with it. What a self-degrading bit of treachery! and yet he would carry it out. 'Pater,' he said, as he walked along, 'I mean to take a holiday this afternoon. I'm going to the Montagus' water party.'

'Very inconvenient, Harold, my boy; "Wilkins *versus* the Great Northern Railway Company" coming on for hearing; and besides, Ernest's going there too. They won't want a pair of you, will they?'

'Can't help it, Pater,' Harold answered. 'I have particular business at Surbiton, much more important to me than "Wilkins *versus* the Great Northern Railway Company."'

His father looked at him keenly. 'Ha,' he said, 'a lady in the case, is there? Very well, my boy, if you must you must, and that's the end of it. A young man in love never does make an efficient lawyer. Get it over quickly, pray; get it over quickly, that's all I beg of you.'

'I shall get it over, I promise you,' Harold answered, 'this very afternoon.'

The father whistled. 'Whew,' he said, 'that's sharp work, too, Harold, isn't it? You haven't even told me her name yet. This is really very sudden.' But as Harold volunteered no further information, Mr. Carnegie, who was a shrewd man of the world, held it good policy to ask him nothing more about it for the present; and so they walked on the rest of the way to the father's office in unbroken silence.

At one o'clock Harold shut up his desk at the office and ran down to Surbiton. At Clapham Junction he kept a sharp look out for Ernest, but Ernest was not there. Clearly, as Harold anticipated, he hadn't learnt the alteration in the time-tables, and wouldn't reach Clapham Junction till the train for Surbiton had started.

At Surbiton Harold pushed on arrangements as quickly as possible, and managed to get the party off before Ernest arrived upon the scene. Mrs. Montagu, seeing 'one of the young Carnegies' duly to hand, and never having attempted to discriminate between them in any way, was perfectly happy at the prospect of getting landed at Lady Portlebury's without any minute investigation of the intricate question of Christian names. The Montagus were *nouveaux riches* in the very act of pushing themselves into fashionable society; and a chance of invading the Portlebury lawn was extremely welcome to them upon any terms whatsoever.

Isabel Walters was looking charming. A light morning dress became her even better than the dark red satin of the night before last; and she smiled at Harold with the smile of a mutual confidence when she took his hand, in a way that made his heart throb fast within him. From that moment forward, he forgot Ernest and the unworthy trick he was playing, and thought wholly and solely of Isabel Walters.

What a handsome young man he was, really, and how cleverly and brilliantly he talked all the way up to Portlebury Lodge! Everybody listened to him; he was the life and soul of the party. Isabel felt more flattered than ever at his marked attention. He was the doctor, wasn't he? No, the lawyer. Well, really, how impossible it was to distinguish and remember them. And so well connected, too! If he were to propose to her, now, she could afford to be so condescending to Amy Balfour.

At Lady Portlebury's lawn the steam-launch halted, and Harold managed to get Isabel alone among the walks, while his aunt escorted the main body of visitors thus thrust upon her hands over the conservatories. Eager and hasty, now, he lost no time in making the best of the situation.

'I guessed as much, of course, from your letter, Mr. Carnegie,' Isabel said, playing with her fan with downcast eyes, as he pressed his offer upon her; 'and I really didn't know whether it was right of me to come here without showing it to mamma and asking her advice about it. But I'm quite sure I oughtn't to give you an answer at once, because I've seen so very little of you. Let us leave the question open for a little. It's asking so much to ask one for a definite reply on such a very short acquaintance.'

'No, no, Miss Walters,' Harold said quickly. 'For Heaven's sake give me an answer now, I beg of you—I implore you. I *must* have an answer at once, immediately. If you can't love me

at first sight, for my own sake—as I loved you the moment I saw you—you can never, never, never love me! Doubt and hesitation are impossible in true love. Now, or refuse me for ever! Surely you must know in your own heart whether you can love me or not; if your heart tells you that you can, then trust it—trust it—don't argue and reason with it, but say at once you will make me happy for ever.'

'Mr. Carnegie,' Isabel said, lifting her eyes for a moment, 'I do think, perhaps—I don't know—but perhaps, after a little while, I could love you. I like you very much; won't that do for the present? Why are you in such a hurry for an answer? Why can't you give me a week or two to decide in?'

'Because,' said Harold, desperately, 'if I give you a week my brother will ask you, and perhaps you will marry him instead of me. He is always before me in everything, and I'm afraid he'll be before me in this. Say you'll have me, Miss Walters—oh, do say you'll have me, and save me from the misery of a week's suspense!'

'But, Mr. Carnegie, how can I say anything when I haven't yet made up my own mind about it? Why, I hardly know you yet from your brother.'

'Ah, that's just it,' Harold cried, in a voice of positive pain. 'You won't find any difference at all between us, if you come to know us; and then perhaps you'll be induced to marry my brother. But you know this much already, that here am I, begging and pleading before you this very minute, and surely you won't send me away with my prayer unanswered!'

There was such a look of genuine anguish and passion in his face that Isabel Walters, already strongly prepossessed in his favour, could resist no longer. She bent her head a little, and whispered very softly, 'I will promise, Mr. Carnegie; I will promise.'

Harold seized her hand eagerly, and covered it with kisses. 'Isabel,' he cried in a fever of joy, 'you have promised. You are mine—mine—mine. You are mine, now and for ever!'

Isabel bowed her head, and felt a tear standing dimly in her eye, though she brushed it away hastily. 'Yes,' she said gently; 'I will be yours. I think—I think—I feel sure I can love you.'

Harold took her ungloved hand tenderly in his, and drew a ring off her finger. 'Before I give you mine,' he said, 'you will let me take this one? I want it for a keepsake and a memorial.'

Isabel whispered, 'Yes.'

Harold drew another ring from his pocket and slipped it softly on her third finger. Isabel saw by the glitter that there was a diamond in it. Harold had bought it the day before for that very purpose. Then he took from a small box a plain gold locket,



with the letter H raised on it. 'I want you to wear this,' he said, as a keepsake for me.'

'But why H?' Isabel asked him, looking a little puzzled. 'Your name's Ernest, isn't it?'

Harold smiled as well as he was able. 'How absurd it is!' he

said, with an effort at gaiety. 'This ridiculous similarity pursues us everywhere. No, my name's Harold.'

Isabel stood for a moment surprised and hesitating. She really hardly knew for the second which brother she ought to consider herself engaged to. 'Then it wasn't you who wrote to me?' she said with a tone of some surprise, and a little start of astonishment.

'No, I certainly didn't write to you; but I came here to-day expecting to see you, and meaning to ask you to be my wife. I learned from my brother ("there can be no falsehood in putting it that way," he thought vainly to himself) that you were to be here; and I determined to seize the opportunity. Ernest meant to have come, too, but I believe he must have lost the train at Clapham Junction.' That was all literally true, and yet it sounded simple and plausible enough.

Isabel looked at him with a puzzled look, and felt almost compelled to laugh, the situation was so supremely ridiculous. It took a moment to think it all out rationally. Yet, after all, though the letter came from the other brother, Ernest, it was this particular brother, Harold, she had been talking to and admiring all the day; it was this particular brother, Harold, who had gained her consent, and whom she had promised to love and to marry. And at that moment it would have been doing Isabel Walters an injustice not to admit that in her own soul she did then and there really love Harold Carnegie.

'Harold,' she said slowly, as she took the locket and hung it round her neck, 'Harold. Yes, now I know. Then, Harold Carnegie, I shall take your locket and wear it always as a keepsake from you.' And she looked up at him with a smile in which there was something more than mere passing coquettish fancy. You see, he was really terribly in earnest; and the very fact that he should have been so anxious to anticipate his brother, and should have anticipated him successfully, made her woman's heart go forth toward him instinctively. As Harold himself said, he was there bodily present before her; while Ernest, the writer of the mysterious letter, was nothing more to her in reality than a name and a shadow. Harold had asked her, and won her; and she was ready to love and cleave to Harold from that day forth for that very reason. What woman of them all has a better reason to give in the last resort for the faith that is in her?

V.



MEANWHILE, at Clapham Junction, Ernest Carnegie had arrived three minutes too late for the Surbiton train, and had been forced to wait for the 2.40. Of that he thought little: they would wait for him, he knew, if they waited an hour; for Mrs. Montagu would not for worlds have missed the chance of showing her guests round Lady Portlebury's gardens. So he settled himself down comfortably in the snug corner of his first-class carriage, and ran down by the later train in perfect confidence that he would find the steam launch waiting.

'No, sir, they've gone up the river in the launch, sir,' said the man who opened the door for him; 'and, I beg pardon, sir, but I thought you were one of the party.'

In a moment Ernest's fancy, quickened by his jealousy, jumped instinctively at the true meaning of the man's mistake. 'What, he said, 'was there a gentleman very like me, in a grey coat and straw hat—same ribbon as this one?'

'Yes, sir. Exactly, sir. Well, indeed, I should have said it was yourself, sir; but I suppose it was the other Mr. Carnegie.'

'It was!' Ernest answered between his clenched teeth, almost inarticulate with anger. 'It was he. Not a doubt of it. Harold! I see it all. The treachery—the base treachery! How long have they been gone, I say? How long, eh?'

‘About half an hour, sir; they went up towards Henley, sir.’

Ernest Carnegie turned aside, reeling with wrath and indignation. That his brother, his own familiar twin brother, should have played him this abominable, disgraceful trick! The meanness of it! The deceit of it! The petty spying and letter-opening of it! For somehow or other—inconceivable how—Harold must have opened his brother’s letters. And then, quick as lightning, for those two brains jumped together, the thought of the blotting-book flashed across Ernest’s mind. Why, he had noticed this morning that a page was gone out of it. He must have read the letters. And then the trains! Harold always got a time-table on the first of each month, with his cursed methodical lawyer ways. And he had never told him about the change of service. The dirty low trick! The mean trick! Even to think of it made Ernest Carnegie sick at heart and bitterly indignant.

In a minute he saw it all and thought it all out. Why did he—how did he? Why, he knew as clearly as if he could read Harold’s thoughts, exactly how the whole vile plot had first risen upon him, and worked itself out within his traitorous brain. How? Ah, how? That was the bitterest, the most horrible, the deadliest part of it all. Ernest Carnegie knew, because he felt in his own inmost soul that, had he been put in the same circumstances, he would himself have done exactly as Harold had done.

Yes, exactly in every respect. Harold must have seen the words in the blotting-book, ‘My dear Miss Walters’—Ernest remembered how thickly and blackly he had written—must have seen those words; and in their present condition, either of the twins, jealous, angry, suspicious, half driven by envy of one another out of their moral senses, would have torn out the page then and there and read it all. He, too, would have kept silence about the train; he would have gone down to Surbiton; he would have proposed to Isabel Walters; he would have done in everything exactly as he knew Harold must have done it; but that did not make his anger and loathing for his brother any the weaker. On the contrary, it only made them all the more terrible. His consciousness of his own equal potential meanness roused his rage against Harold to a white heat. He would have done the same himself, no doubt; yes; but Harold, the mean, successful, actually accomplishing villain—Harold had really gone down and done it all in positive fact and reality.

Flushing scarlet and blanching white alternately with the

fierceness of his anger, Ernest Carnegie turned down, all on fire, to the river's edge. Should he take a boat and row up after them to prevent the supplanter at least from proposing to Isabel unopposed? That would at any rate give him something to do—muscular work for his arms, if nothing else, to counteract the fire within him; but on second thoughts, no, it would be quite useless. The steam launch had had a good start of him, and no oarsman could catch up with it now by any possibility. So he walked about up and down near the river, chafing in soul and nursing his wrath against Harold for three long weary hours. And all that time Harold, false-hearted, fair-spoken, mean-spirited Harold, was enjoying himself and playing the gallant to Isabel Walters!

Minute by minute the hours wore away, and with every minute Ernest's indignation grew deeper and deeper. At last he heard the snort of the steam-launch ploughing its way lustily down the river, and he stood on the bank waiting for the guilty Harold to disembark.

As Harold stepped from the launch, and gave his hand to Isabel, he saw the white and bloodless face of his brother looking up at him contemptuously and coldly from beside the landing. Harold passed ashore and close by him, but Ernest never spoke a word. He only looked a moment at Isabel, and said to her with enforced calmness, 'You got my letter, Miss Walters?'

Isabel, hardly comprehending the real solemnity of the occasion, answered with a light smile, 'I did, Mr. Carnegie, but you didn't keep your appointment. Your brother came, and he has been beforehand with you.' And she touched his hand lightly and went on to join her hostess.

Still Ernest Carnegie said nothing, but walked on, as black as night, beside his brother. Neither spoke a word; but after the shaking of hands and farewells were over, both turned together to the railway station. The carriage was crowded, and so Ernest still held his tongue.

At last, when they reached home and stood in the passage together, Ernest looked at his brother with a look of withering scorn, and, livid with anger, found his voice at last.

'Harold Carnegie,' he said, in a low husky tone, 'you are a mean interceptor of other men's letters; a sneaking supplanter of other men's appointments; a cur and a traitor whom I don't wish any longer to associate with. I know what you have done,

and I know how you have done it. You have kept my engagement with Isabel Walters by reading the impression of my notes on the blotting-book. You are unfit for a gentleman to speak to, and I cast you off, now and for ever.'

Harold looked at him defiantly, but said never a word.

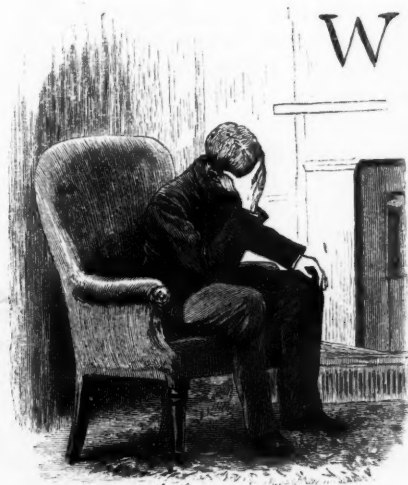
'Harold Carnegie,' Ernest said again, 'I could hardly believe your treachery until it was forced upon me. This is the last time I shall ever speak to you.'

Harold looked at him again, this time perhaps with a tinge of remorse in his expression, and said nothing but, 'Oh, Ernest.'

Ernest made a gesture with his hands as though he would repel him. 'Don't come near me,' he said; 'Harold Carnegie, don't touch me! Don't call me by my name! I will have nothing more to say or do with you.'

Harold turned away in dead silence, and went to his own room, trembling with conscious humiliation and self-reproach. But he did not attempt to make the only atonement in his power by giving up Isabel Walters. That would have been too much for human nature.

VI.



WHEN Harold Carnegie was finally married to Isabel Walters, Ernest stopped away from the wedding, and would have nothing whatever to say either to bride or bridegroom. He would leave his unnatural brother, he said, solely and entirely to the punishment of his own guilty conscience.

Still, he couldn't rest quiet in his father's house after Harold was gone, so he took himself small rooms near the hospital, and there he lived his lonely life entirely by himself, a solitary man, brooding miserably over

his own wrongs and Harold's treachery. There was only one single woman in the world, he said, with whom he could ever have been really happy—Isabel Walters: and Harold had stolen Isabel Walters away from him by the basest treason. Once he could have loved Isabel, and her only; now, because she was Harold's wife, he bitterly hated her. Yes, hated her! With a deadly hatred he hated both of them.

Months went by slowly, for Ernest Carnegie, in the dull drudgery of his hopeless professional life, for he cared nothing now for ambition or advancement; he lived wholly in the past, nursing his wrath, and devouring his own soul in angry regretfulness. Months went by, and at last Harold's wife gave birth to a baby—a boy, the exact image of his father and his uncle. Harold looked at the child in the nurse's arms, and said remorsefully, 'We will call him Ernest. It is all we can do now, Isabel. We will call him Ernest, after my dear lost brother.' So they called him Ernest, in the faint hope that his uncle's heart might relent a little; and Harold wrote a letter full of deep and bitter penitence to his brother, piteously begging his forgiveness for the grievous wrong he had wickedly and deliberately done him. But Ernest still nursed his righteous wrath silently in his own bosom, and tore up the letter into a thousand fragments, unanswered.

When the baby was five months old, Edie Carnegie came round hurriedly one morning to Ernest's lodgings near the hospital. 'Ernest, Ernest,' she cried, running up the stairs in great haste, 'we want you to come round and see Harold. We're afraid he's very ill. Don't say you won't come and see him!'

Ernest Carnegie listened and smiled grimly. 'Very ill,' he muttered, with a dreadful gleam in his eyes. 'Very ill, is he? and I have had nothing the matter with me! How curious! Very ill! I ought to have had the same illness a fortnight ago. Ha, ha! The cycle is broken! The clocks have ceased to strike together! His marriage has altered the run of his constitution—mine remains the same steady striker as ever. I thought it would! I thought it would! Perhaps he'll die, now, the mean, miserable traitor!'

Edie Carnegie looked at him in undisguised horror. 'Oh, Ernest,' she cried, with the utmost dismay; 'your own brother! Your own brother! Surely you'll come and see him, and tell us what's the matter.'

'Yes, I'll come and see him,' Ernest answered, unmoved, taking

up his hat. 'I'll come and see him, and find out what's the matter.' But there was an awful air of malicious triumph in his tone, which perfectly horrified his trembling sister.

When Ernest reached his brother's house, he went at once to



Harold's bedside, and without a word of introduction or recognition he began inquiring into the nature of his symptoms, exactly as he would have done with any unknown and ordinary patient. Harold told him them all, simply and straightforwardly, without any more preface than he would have used with any other

doctor. When Ernest had finished his diagnosis, he leaned back carelessly in his easy chair, folded his arms sternly, and said in a perfectly cold, clear, remorseless voice, 'Ah, I thought so; yes, yes, I thought so. It's a serious functional disorder of the heart; and there's very little hope indeed that you'll ever recover from it. No hope at all, I may say; no hope at all, I'm certain. The thing has been creeping upon you, creeping upon you, evidently, for a year past, and it has gone too far now to leave the faintest hope of ultimate recovery.'

Isabel burst into tears at the words—calmly spoken as though they were perfectly indifferent to both speaker and hearers; but Harold only rose up fiercely in the bed, and cried in a tone of the most imploring agony, 'Oh, Ernest, Ernest, if I must die, for Heaven's sake, before I die, say you forgive me, do say, do say you forgive me. Oh, Ernest, dear Ernest, dear brother Ernest, for the sake of our long, happy friendship, for the sake of the days when we loved one another with a love passing the love of women, do, do say you will at last forgive me.'

Ernest rose and fumbled nervously for a second with the edge of his hat. 'Harold Carnegie,' he said at last, in a voice trembling with excitement, 'I can never forgive you. You acted a mean, dirty part, and I can never forgive you. Heaven may, perhaps it will; but as for me, I can never, never, never forgive you!'

Harold fell back feebly and wearily upon the pillows. 'Ernest, Ernest,' he cried, gasping, 'you might forgive me! you ought to forgive me! you must forgive me! and I'll tell you why. I didn't want to say it, but now you force me. I know it as well as if I'd seen you do it. In my place, I know to a certainty, Ernest, you'd have done exactly as I did. Ernest Carnegie, you can't look me straight in the face and tell me that you wouldn't have acted exactly as I did.'

That terrible unspoken truth, long known, but never confessed, even to himself, struck like a knife on Ernest's heart. He raised his hat blindly, and walked with unsteady steps out of the sick-room. At that moment, his own conscience smote him with awful vividness. Looking into the inmost recesses of his angry heart, he felt with a shudder that Harold had spoken the simple truth, and he dared not lie by contradicting him. In Harold's place he would have done exactly as Harold did! And that was just what made his deathless anger burn all the more fiercely and fervidly against his brother!

Groping his way down the stairs alone in a stunned and dazzled fashion, Ernest Carnegie went home in his agony to his lonely lodgings, and sat there solitary with his own tempestuous thoughts for the next eight-and-forty hours. He did not undress or lie down to sleep, though he dozed a little at times uneasily in his big armchair; he did not eat or drink much; he merely paced up and down his room feverishly, and sent his boy round at intervals of an hour or two to know how the doctor thought Mr. Harold Carnegie was getting on. The boy returned every time with uniformly worse and worse reports. Ernest rubbed his hands in horrid exultation: 'Ah,' he said to himself, eagerly, 'he will die! he will die! he will pay the penalty of his dirty treachery! He has brought it all upon himself by marrying that wicked woman! He deserves it every bit for his mean conduct.'

On the third morning Edie came round again, this time with her mother. Both had tears in their eyes, and they implored Ernest with sobs and entreaties to come round and see Harold once more before he died. Harold was raving and crying for him in his weakness and delirium. But Ernest was like adamant. He would not go to see him, he said, not if they went down bodily on their knees before him.

At midday, the boy went again, and stayed a little longer than usual. When he returned, he brought back word that Mr. Harold Carnegie had died just as the clock was striking the hour. Ernest listened with a look of terror and dismay, and then broke down into a terrible fit of sobbing and weeping. When Edie came round a little later to tell him that all was over, she found him crying like a child in his own easy chair, and muttering to himself in a broken fashion how dearly he and Harold had loved one another years ago, when they were both happy children together.

Edie took him round to his brother's house, and there, over the deaf and blind face that lay cold upon the pillows, he cried the cry that he would not cry over his living, imploring brother. 'Oh, Harold, Harold,' he groaned in his broken agony, 'I forgive you, I forgive you. I too sinned as you did. What you would do, I would do. It was bound up in both our natures. In your place I would have done as you did. But now the curse of Cain is upon me! A worse curse than Cain's is upon me! I have more than killed my brother!'

For a day or two Ernest went back, heart-broken, to his father's house, and slept once more in the old room where he used

to sleep so long, next door to Harold's. At the end of three days, he woke once from one of his short snatches of sleep with a strange fluttering feeling in his left side. He knew in a moment what it was. It was the same disease that Harold had died of.

'Thank Heaven!' he said to himself eagerly, 'thank Heaven, thank Heaven for that! Then I didn't wholly kill him! His blood isn't all upon my poor unhappy head. After all, his marriage didn't quite upset the harmony of the two clocks; it only made the slower one catch up for a while and pass the faster. I'm a fortnight later in striking than Harold this time; that's all. In three days more the clock will run down, and I shall die as he did.'

And, true to time, in three days more, as the clock struck twelve, Ernest Carnegie died as his brother Harold had done before him, with the agonised cry for forgiveness trembling on his fevered lips—who knows whether answered or unanswered?

AT SCUTARI.

FAR off, beneath an opal sky,
 Where sacred pigeons dart and fly,
 Where snowy sea-gulls float o'erhead,
 I left her—with the quiet dead!

Where myrtle lifts her starry crown
 And roses cast their treasures down,
 Where olives lend their tender shade,
 'Twas there my love, my life, they laid.

And near her grave with silvery spray
 A fountain falls the livelong day;
 But 'tis the only voice shall break
 The silence till my dead awake.

Afar is heard the city's din,
 The ox-cart's roll, the muezzin,
 The howl of famish'd dogs—but how
 Shall aught disturb my darling *now*?

Night bids the nightingales awake
 That sorrow for another's sake;
 Like us they wail, like us retain
 Their incommunicable pain!

Still they remember, still they know
 The hearts that broke so long ago,
 Their own with human grief must thrill
 When ours and all we loved are still.

Hard by the waves of Bosph'rus glide,
 Tho' ilex-groves his waters hide,
 Night broods on min'ret, dome, and tree—
 Night and the silence of the sea.

LEECHES.

It was the opinion of Mrs. Gamp when, in consequence of a distressing communication just received from a sporting gentleman on the Stock Exchange, Mr. Poll Sweedlepipes appeared before her 'in a nice state of confugion'—it was the opinion of that remarkable woman that 'half a dudgeon fresh lively young leeches' on his temple would not be too much to clear his mind. The little barber's agitation was only what one would expect from so sympathetic a soul, for young Bailey lay apparently breathing his last at Salisbury, and though, as Mrs. Gamp remarked with philosophic coolness, 'He was born in a wale, and he lived in a wale; and he must take the consequences of sech a sitiuation,' his meek and admiring friend could never forget he had once charged him a ha'penny too much for a redpole to hang over the sink, nor could leeches, however potent their effects might be in clearing his mind, have ever done as much for his memory. In those days, among physicians, apothecaries, and surgeons; in dispensaries and hospitals, and, among them, at the institution known to Mrs. Gamp and her partner Betsy Prig as

Barklemy's,' there was no more popular remedy than the leech, and it was only natural that a lady under whose observing eye the parasite was hourly prescribed for so many different disorders should recommend its application in a complicated case of regret for a friend and remorse for a piece of sharp dealing. It was, no doubt, this somewhat indiscriminate use by Mrs. Gamp's patrons and employers that has almost made the leech, considered therapeutically, an animal of the past, and has completely driven the Cupper, who once came daily to the hospital to carry out the orders left by the doctor, out of the Post Office Directory.

Nor, now that we are on the subject of contemporary reference, should we omit to recall that picture drawn by the Uncommercial Traveller who, one summer evening, met the leeches leisurely going westward from Gray's Inn. They had strayed, it will be remembered, from his friend Parkle's knee, where a feeble and frightened ticket porter had been for some hours vainly endeavouring to apply them; and where they went to no one ever knew with certainty, not even Mrs. Miggot the laundress, though next morning it was rumoured that the out-of-door young man of

Bickle Bush and Bodger, on the ground floor, had been bitten and blooded by some creature not identified. Nor again that inimitable drawing by the hand of their great namesake, where the elderly female in the omnibus creates a panic by breaking a jarful among her fellow-passengers.

There is, perhaps, no sterner comment on the futility of a man's calling than when he finds he cannot live by it. In art, it is not uncommon for the practitioner under such circumstances to devote himself to posterity and to announce, not as a rule without bitterness, that in thus ignoring the present he perfectly understands the wants of the future, infinitely preferring the estimation of the one to the money of the other. In trade, it is more usual for him to make what he can out of his business, if it be not altogether barren, at the same time adding to it the pursuit of something more profitable. The poet is sometimes an upholsterer, and the artist owner of an effervescent table-water; each supplementing the other, in what Dr. Johnson declared was probably the most innocent of all employments, that of making money. And so it is with leeches, for no one nowadays can hope to make a living by their importation and sale alone, though as an agreeable addition to income, a little pocket-money as it was expressed to us, the leech still holds a place of a certain kind and does a certain amount of work. Of the two firms in London, and there are only two, to whom the foreign leeches are consigned from Hamburg, one practises as a dental surgeon and the other sells pipes, tobacco, and other trifles. Both are of sufficient standing to recall *les beaux jours passés* of the trade, the great times of indiscriminate blood-letting, when, whether the patient suffered from a black eye, a headache, a liver, or a heart, he lost a couple of ounces of blood and was declared to be better. Now scarcely one is used where a century ago a hundred flourished, and the sixpenny leech of even so recent a date as 1860 has fallen to something less than a halfpenny at wholesale price. How much of this is due to the caprice of fashion, which rules in medicine as in all other human affairs, and how much to the genuine advancement of knowledge, it is not exactly our province to determine. The fact remains that the present generation of medical men now seldom or never employ them, and that where the young doctor of forty years ago prescribed leeches he now sends round a lotion.

The leech, though not as a rule long-lived, is an animal of

considerable antiquity. It is the *βδέλλα* of Theocritus, Herodotus, Nicander ; the *hirudo* and *sanguisuga* of Plautus, Cicero, Horace, Pliny. It was highly recommended by Galen, to whose recommendation, no doubt, was due its excessive abuse by the ignorant faculty of the days of Le Sage and Molière, who, when they killed, killed according to rule and in the approved manner of the ancients. 'Why bleed folks when they are not ill?' asks Géronte in *Le médecin malgré lui*, referring to the common practice of the time. 'It does not matter,' replies Sganarelle, 'the method is salutary ; and as we drink for the thirst to come, so must we bleed for the disease to come.' No completer proof of the popularity of the leech with the early practitioner can be afforded than by the fact that the verb *to leech* means both to treat with medicine and to bleed, while the doctor himself, even so late as the days of Shakespeare, borrowed the name of his favourite instrument of healing. There are many now living who can remember when in the spring it was usual to be bled, both as a means of getting rid of the evil humours of the winter and as a precaution against the visitations the summer heat was supposed to be fruitful in. The wholesome and penetrating humour of Molière, directed perhaps more constantly against the doctors than any other class, struck a blow at blood-letting from which it has never recovered ; and though possibly the practice is more neglected nowadays than it deserves, yet it is no doubt safer that it should be so than that the leech should be suffered to range over the human frame as indiscriminately as once it used.

The leech held in the highest estimation in the profession and the trade is meagre and hungry-looking, and resembles, if the imagination can be so far stretched, in its appearance and unscrupulous appetite, the Frenchman of the caricaturist of the last century. It is vigorous and exceedingly lively, and even after imprisonment in a jar for six months or a year with no other nourishment than the microscopic organisms of the water, will be found waving to and fro in a state of the highest content and enjoyment. Taken in the hand it will settle down to work with surprising readiness, and hardened though the skin may be with labour, the tennis or the cricket-bat, it is not long before the experimentalist feels those unpleasant pin-pricks that tell the animal's five little mouths are biting. In certain conditions of temperature, in extreme heat or extreme cold, this readiness is not so pronounced, and it will be necessary to develop it by

immersion in tepid water, or, in extreme cases, in the night-nurse's porter. Should even this stimulant fail, it is not uncommon as an additional incentive to anoint the part where the leech is to be applied with a little cream or blood.

This slender, meagre, hungry leech comes from Turkey, within a radius of fifty miles of Constantinople, and from Buda-Pesth, where the country people bring them in, like watercress, by thousands from the ditches and sell them to the dealers. They are found there in all ditches and ponds, and wherever there is pure running water, weeds for shelter, and muddy banks and bottoms. They are, as a rule, netted in nets prepared with bait, though we are also informed that it is not rare for the hardy peasant to walk bare-legged through the water and strip them off as fast as they can adhere to the calf. However they are caught, by plain honest fishing or by human artifice, from Buda-Pesth without distinction of age or size they travel to Hamburg, where they lie in vast ponds or reservoirs until the time for their selection arrives. These reservoirs it has been found necessary to have carefully watched day and night by the local police, for the leech, no more than humbler parasites—the flea, for instance, since the discovery of its capacity for education—has not escaped the common lot of being an object to larceny. In these reservoirs they lie, generally for a year, and during all that time, if they are properly cared for, they should receive no food, or rather no more than they can find for themselves in the water. But this is a rule that is not always observed as it should be, for there are many merchants who, not from any principles of humanity, but from the more sordid desire to bring the animal up to weight, persistently feed up their specimens and send them into the market, in the expressive word of the trade, gorged. Some give them blood and some liver, and some, so that all tastes may be satisfied, the entire body of a horse thrown among them; with the result that on arrival in this country their appetites are fatigued, and they are found to need those stimulants to performance to which we have already referred. From Hamburg, when their time of probation is over, they are imported here direct in bags and boxes, and at the back of the surgery in Pentonville or among the pipes and tobacco of Houndsditch they lie in shallow earthen vessels tightly covered with gauze or linen, the halting stage on the way to the wholesale druggist and the hospital. With the importer they rarely tarry for more than four or five days, but are sent out almost as fast as they come

in, in small wooden boxes similar to those used by fruiterers for honeycomb. From the wholesale druggist they pass again to the chemist and the apothecary, and, when the perils of travel and the variations of climate they go through are considered, the intending purchaser must not be surprised if he finds himself asked sixpence for an animal that cost the first dealer a shilling for a couple of hundred. Many die on the voyage and many in the short time they remain with the importer; and though in theory the selected leech will stand any extreme of heat or cold, many of the five-and-twenties and fifties ordered by the chemist, carefully treated as they are, do not live to fulfil what seems to be the sole reason of their existence, that of drawing blood.

The apothecary is now perhaps the greatest patron of the leech, as no doubt it is proper he should be, for both of them seem almost together to be dying out of our civilisation. It was not always so, when Mr. Pendennis, Arthur's father, was alive and exercised the profession of apothecary and surgeon, and not only sold a cake of brown Windsor or a tooth-brush across the counter, but 'attended gentlemen in their sick-rooms, and ladies at the most interesting period of their lives.' On one of the shelves of his modest little shop in Bath there would be sure to have been a jar or two of leeches, ready for Master Ribstone's eye or one of Lady Pontypool's numerous ailments; nor when he shut up the shop, discarded the selling of tooth-brushes and perfumery, and devoted himself entirely to the surgery and a genteel young assistant, did he forget to keep among the tamarinds and the rose-powder many specimens of the animal whose application was then so fashionable. And who does not remember those last words the Great Duke found strength to ejaculate, on waking and finding himself in the throes of his last illness, 'Send for the apothecary!' who, though too late, did not fail to bring his leeches with him?

The leech should never properly be applied more than once, and can be applied anywhere. It fills in about a quarter of an hour, and will absorb altogether from forty to eighty-five grains of blood, or in all about half an ounce. In the old days the economic practitioner would not uncommonly prepare it for further action by sprinkling a few grains of salt on the snout and stripping it gently between the fingers; but that plan is not now adopted, partly for fear of communicating disease, and partly 'because the cheapness of the article no longer renders it neces-

sary. It can still be used four or five times, if others cannot be procured, by being placed in vinegar and water, though on the fifth occasion it will be found to draw less blood. As a rule, the relief afforded by the leech is assisted by the subsequent hæmorrhage, in many cases severe, and only to be staunched by the application of vinegar, nitrate of silver, hot wire, or a hot solution of alum. It can be applied anywhere, even in the mouth, when, to prevent the chance of its being swallowed, a leech glass is used, with a glass piston to push the leech up, and in some countries, notably China, a piece of bamboo. If, notwithstanding these precautions, a mishap should occur, instant relief will be afforded by a strong solution of common salt or a glassful or two of wine.

There is an ingenious instrument known as the artificial leech, once occasionally used, but now scarcely ever met with. It consists of a small sharp steel cylinder worked by a spring, with which a circular incision is made, and with an interior glass cylinder, capable of being exhausted by a piston worked by a screw. It was invented partly to meet those not uncommon cases when the patient, usually a man, declared he would die and went off into a faint if touched by the live leech; partly because the amount of blood abstracted could be thus precisely measured, and partly because the leech-bites have sometimes become inflamed through the leeches employed being unhealthy. It is not a good instrument, and is, as we say, not used now. There is a specimen to be seen in the Museum of the College of Surgeons among the 'Surgical Instrument Series.' When it was presented, about 1876, none of the Council could guess what it was or what it was meant for, until an old country doctor was found to explain.

The best leeches, and almost the only specimens in use in this country, come, as we have said, from Buda-Pesth and Turkey, and journeying to Hamburg are known as the speckled Hamburg. They come also from Poland and Ukraine, from Wallachia, Russia, Egypt, and Algeria, whence they go to the foreign hospitals, where they are still very popular, but more especially so with the general practitioner of Germany and Austria. In the French trade the Bordeaux leech is preferred, but in this country it is not much patronised; for coming to us, as it does, gorged, it cannot readily be got to bite. Occasionally, being held in considerable estimation by the foreign dealer for its useful qualities in making up weight, it finds its way into one of our parcels; but

its uncomely and bloated presence is at once detected on unpacking, and it rarely travels any farther than down the sink.

In England there is a less powerful species commonly found, though now never used. It is known as the horse-leech, from its habit of attacking the membranes lining the mouths and nostrils of animals drinking at the pools it haunts. It is in its way venomous, and, when applied to the human subject, inflammation, leading to erysipelas, has been known to follow its bite. There must be something in our waters unfavourable to the growth and culture of the parasite, for not only is the indigenous leech useless, and indeed harmful, but the foreign specimens which efforts have been made to acclimatise have never come to any good. Thirty years ago a prominent English firm projected and founded a farm at Norwood for the breeding and cultivation of the Turkish and Hungarian leech, but, either from ignorance of treatment or changefulness of climate, they all sickened and died, and the scheme collapsed. Nor since then has anything in a similar direction been attempted. The largest leech establishment in the world is situate, we are told, near Newton, on Long Island, in the United States, where thirteen acres are covered with reservoirs. They have bottoms of clay and margins of peat, on which the leeches, considered by old writers to be viviparous until the phenomenon of the cocoon was observed, deposit their cocoons from July onwards. The time between the deposition of the ova and hatching is estimated at from twenty-five to forty days, and then begins that long warfare against the musk-rat, water-shrew, and water-rat, their chief enemies, that apparently play havoc with them, since, notwithstanding the immense numbers bred, immense numbers are imported. Their food is at first the microscopic organisms found in the water, and later, when the mouths develope, the larvæ of insects. Not till they are full grown are they fed regularly, by the suspension every six months in the water of linen bags of fresh blood. Digestion is with them so slow that even this periodic feeding is, according to some authorities, more than enough, and in the English trade they are much preferred unfed. The age at which they come to us is variously stated at from twelve months to three years, between which times it may be taken broadly they are at their liveliest. They are best kept in vessels of earth or glass, half full of water, with the addition of a rusty nail or a few pebbles as an assistance to shedding the coat, and tightly covered

with linen gauze to prevent them from straying. Loose turf or wet moss is also employed in an arrangement known as the French domestic marsh, more especially for transportation.

There are nearly five hundred thousand leeches annually imported into this country, of the majority of which the career and application remain something of a mystery. The loss by death can scarcely be more than ten per cent., and though in an average assembly there will probably not be one present who has ever experienced a leech's bite, they are certainly all used, and used medicinally. Numbers of them go to the hospitals, but even there their employment is so small that in all London it is doubtful whether that will account for more than a tenth of the importation. Dr. Hare, in a recent lecture entitled 'Good Remedies out of Fashion,' publishes some interesting statistics which place in the clearest light the modern disuse of the leech. At St. George's Hospital in 1832, the numbers reached 21,800; 19,600 in 1842; 4,050 in 1852; and in 1882, 754. At University College Hospital they were 8,000 in 1852, and 400 in 1882. At St. Thomas's Hospital in 1842, 21,000; 1852, 12,000; and 1882, 800. At St. Bartholomew's in 1832, no fewer than 97,000 were prescribed; in 1842, 48,100; and 1882 (with a somewhat larger number of beds), only 1,700. And all this, adds Dr. Hare, notwithstanding that the population of London has enormously augmented, that the beds in the hospitals have been very largely increased in number, and that the general business of the chemist has greatly extended. In addition to these statistics we have been furnished by one of the London firms we have referred to with the numbers that in the last forty years have passed through their hands. They are as follows: in 1842, 795,000; in 1852, 290,000; in 1862, 275,000; in 1872, 157,000; in 1882, 191,000; and in 1883, 172,000. From these figures it will be seen that, outside of the hospital, there is a vast quantity unaccounted for. They must be lying away among the herbalists, apothecaries, chemists, and surgeons of the country towns; in use among the poor, for the well-to-do, whose tastes are consulted, will no longer tolerate them.

There is probably no one enthusiastic enough over an ancient system seriously to advocate a recurrence to the old indiscriminate blood-letting; but there are certainly many medical men, and those not altogether of the old school, who are inclined to look with more favour upon bleeding in some of its forms than has of

late been usual, and who find in it one of the most potent means of combating some of the most serious conditions met with in their daily practice. There are many now living, as we have said, who can remember when it was common for them to be bled year after year to considerable amounts; and not only did no harm follow, but after the blood-lettings they declare that they would feel better, be stronger, and work better than before. It is not safe, therefore, remarks Dr. Hare, to rush to the conclusion that the disuse of bleeding in its various forms has been the result of philosophically observed and well-ascertained proofs of its injuriousness. The change of practice is to be attributed to causes far less creditable—to that oscillation from one extreme to the other, which is to be observed in medicine as in all other professions. And now there are signs of the return of the balance, in an increased sale of the leech and in its more frequent application in daily practice to cases of pneumonia, pleurisy, and that general plethoric condition for which, among the overfed classes, the doctors, while fully recognising its existence, have not yet designed a comprehensive title. Perhaps, too, in these days of hard-worked school-children and consequent cerebral affections, we may see the leech more confidently prescribed in place of that eternal bromide of potassium with which the sleepless and head-bound undergraduate is so familiar about the time of his trips.

The use of the leech is much more common abroad than with us, and more especially in France and Spain, where the climate lends itself more to the application. The foreign apothecary keeps a larger quantity in stock, and few of them are without their four or five hundred where our countrymen limit themselves to five-and-twenty. Leeches were already going out of fashion when, in 1870, blood-letting received a severe shock from the death of Count Cavour, whose end was hastened by its injudicious use; but his death threw additional discredit on the practice in Europe, and since that year the sale has declined more rapidly than in the twenty previous. Poultices and fomentations have taken their place, because they are generally found sufficient, and are certainly in every respect handier; but we imagine with the result that nowadays the patient is longer under the doctor's hands than he used to be. We have been told, not, as may be guessed, by a member of the profession, that the greater popularity of the lotion over the leech is to a certain extent due to the fact that the smaller practitioners have found they can make

more out of the former than the latter; but as on inquiry it appears that those against whom this charge (if it be a charge) is brought as a rule dispense their own medicines, and can make as much if they please out of leeches as out of lotions, this explanation scarcely holds good. It is more likely that they find that the idea of bleeding and biting frightens their patients. Still it is true that in many cases, for instance those of accident, the relief given by the leech is speedier than that afforded by the lotion; and we have ourselves seen a black eye, received in combat in the neighbourhood of the Pentonville Road, visibly lose its suffused aspect under the leech's bite, and a knee swollen by a cricket-ball subside like the ocean after storm. With a courageous patient, who is not particular as to the means so long as he arrives at the result, those instances are likely to be lively arguments; and more especially with men whose time is emphatically money, or with those who desire to cure their lameness quickly for a county match, and find themselves tied to bed and the wet compress instead.

That every shepherd knows his sheep is accepted as a fact by even the most observant, to whom the different members of the flock look precisely alike; and as a fact we are also bound to accept the statement that among leeches there is individuality; even, as it was pointedly put to us, as great a distinction between many of them as between ourselves and the Claimant. To look at them as they lie in the shallow earthenware vessels, waving and diving, crawling and stretching, they look as much alike as no doubt we do to the superior beings who perhaps occasionally amuse themselves by watching our trivial antics from the fixed stars; but to the fine and penetrating eye we are assured, and we believe, there is a mannerism and an air about each that, apart from the speckles on the belly, mark them out for notice and even affection. And that that mannerism and air spring, as all do, from certain internal qualities which are well capable of definition and of touch, is surely proved by the instance known to us of the old lady who for ten years kept a specimen in a bottle, and for ten years lavished on it all the care and caresses that with other old ladies are usually wasted on a parrot or a poodle. There was a history attached to this leech, the oldest of which there is any record, almost a romance, at which, during a long intercourse, we made many efforts to arrive; but a certain marked tendency to tearfulness and choke on bringing the subject uppermost, even in

the most delicate fashion, effectually deterred us from learning the truth, nor shall we now ever learn it. But on two several occasions were we furnished with an explanation of this leech phantasy—one from the mouth of a friend, and one from the mouth of a foe—which explanations still stand astride in our mind, planted like a Colossus on a double basis: one, that the parasite had, in an hour of supreme physical danger, with noble self-denial (in company with others who did not survive) gorged himself on her person, and so saved her life; the other, that, rashly applied at the very moment when more blood was wanted than could be spared, he had drunk at the fountain-head of her late husband's existence, and, being the last straw that broke the good man's back, had killed him. In either case, both friend and foe agreed she kept and fed him out of gratitude.



